A N44533aaa9

AN EXHORTATION

To Frequent Receiving the

Holy Sacrament

OF THE

LORD's SUPPER.

OR,

A Plain and Practical DISCOURSE upon part of 1 *Cor.* 11. 26.

BEING

The Substance of several SERMONS Preached in St. *Hellens* Church, *London.*

By *Hen. Hesketh*, Vicar of St. *Hellens*, and Chaplain to his Majesty.

LONDON,

Printed for *W. Kettilby* at the *Bishops-head* in St. *Paul's* Church-yard. 1684.

BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Gentlemen and others my very good Friends the Pariſhioners of St. *Hellens*, *London.*

SIRS,

WHat you were pleaſed to give a favourable and kind acceptance unto at the hearing, I do now (according to your deſires) preſent you with, that you may have a more leiſurely peruſal of it. And if it do not in ſome poor meaſure anſwer your expectations, and its own deſign, I ſhall be the more Sorry. Only your Charity (which interprets every thing to the beſt) will extenuate your own diſappointment, and your kind acceptance ſupply in ſome good meaſure its Imperfections: And if you will pleaſe to comply with the purpoſe of it, your advantage, and its own End will be effected; and then no great matter, how mean the Methods were that were uſed to thoſe purpoſes.

I cannot but bewail the preſent ſtate of Reli-

15

gion among us, to see it broken into so many Factions, and lost among the Quarrels about it self. One might reasonably expect to find the thing, where such a noise and bustle is made about it, and that the Controversies and Disputes of the Age, might be taken for Indications of its great (though Luxuriant and Wanton) Knowledge.

And it is certainly a sad reflection, and that which may cause the poor Guides of Souls to sit down in sorrow and silence, to find themselves put to the necessity of making good the Foundations again, and to the irksom trouble of converting Christians to the Christian Religion.

I would to God I could not say that this were now our unhappy time. But he converseth little with Men that doth not know it is. Instead of stating the unhappy Controversies about Religion, we have too much reason to instruct Men in the very reason and nature of it; and there are too many Men, who amidst their boastings of Knowledg in the Mysteries of the Gospel and the Depths of Christianity, are scandalously ignorant in the first Elements and Constitution of it, and those that would be thought to be able to teach others, have need themselves to learn which be the very first Principles of the Oracles of God.

The Apostle expresly calls the Doctrine of Baptism one of the Foundations of Christian Religion; and I think I may safely joyn the Doctrine of the Lords Supper with it; since these are indeed the prime, (if not only) positive Institutions of it, and those which distinguish it from former

mer Diſpenſations: For in all other things I take it to differ from the old Patriarchal and Moſaick Religion, but as a rare piece of Painting, when it hath received the laſt hand of its great Maſter doth from what it was, when the firſt great lines of it were little more than deſcribed.

And if Knowledg in the true nature and reaſon of theſe be one good Criterion, *by which to judge the Knowledg or Ignorance of Chriſtians, I fear too many of our high flyers, muſt be content to perch lower, and not think themſelves reproached, when they are plainly told of their Ignorance.*

I would to God Men were not generally to ſeek in theſe things; but when we obſerve, that ſome oppoſe the Practice of them, and ſo many ſlight and undervalue them, that ſome make it the Badg of Purity, and a greater meaſure of Reformation to diſpute againſt them, and decry them; and ſo very many others can be content to live and die in the neglect of them (eſpecially that which is my preſent Subject) we may ſafely pronounce them ignorant in the nature and reaſons of them: For none that knows what they are, and to what mighty good purpoſes Chriſt hath appointed them, can content himſelf in a diſregard and neglect of them.

I am very ſenſible that many excellent Books have been writ, to inſtruct Men fully in all theſe by which their minds may be informed in the Nature, and their Devotion guided and directed in the Obſervation of this holy Sacrament that I am going to diſcourſe of. And I am none of thoſe that think

any

any thing can be added to them by the labours of ſo mean a Scribe: Nor is any thing of this Nature the deſign of theſe Papers, any farther than was neceſſary to what I intended.

The great and moſt ſcandalous defect now among us, from whatever cauſe it proceeds, is the neglect and diſuſe of this ſervice, or (at leaſt) a fancy that we are at liberty to obſerve it only now and then, as we pleaſe; a humour that hath prevailed ſo far among us, that we have need with thoſe in the Parable, to be compelled to come unto our Lords Table.

A Scandal than which perhaps a greater never befel a Chriſtian Nation, nor any that was clearer and ſadder Demonſtration of the decay of the true, and ancient Spirit of Chriſtianity among us. Time was when the Rein was more needful than the Spur, and the Good Fathers of the Church were employed indeed to direct Mens Devotion aright, but were at no pains to excite it; there was no need to call upon them to come, all the care was only for their right coming. At that time a Man that needed Invitation to come to his Lords Table, would have been ſtared at, reputed an Apoſtate from his Religion, and a Betrayer of his Lord.

It is to revive ſomething of this ancient Spirit and Practice that is the deſign of theſe Diſcourſes, which hath not been ſo immediately driven at by many that I know of, though the Foundations I proceed upon have been laid by all.

And if in your reading other Books, you find how much I have been beholden to other Men, eſpeci-

ally

ally ſome great Men now living, yea ſo far as ſometimes to tranſcribe paſſages, and ſpeak their ſenſe in their own words, I do not ſtick openly and readily to confeſs it. But I do not judge this any injury to thoſe Men, nor diſparagement to my ſelf, nor diſreputation to theſe Papers.

Good Men write to inſtruct the World, and are not diſhonoured by being quoted whilſt living, any more than others count them wronged when they are mentioned being dead. And I am not aſhamed to learn of my betters, nor to borrow their words when I have not apter of my own. I read Books to inform my ſelf, and to enable me to inſtruct others. And if no Diſcourſes muſt be entertained, but what Men ſpin only out of their own unaſſiſted heads, perhaps the greateſt Mens muſt be rejected, and the moſt Learned Books miſerably caſtrated.

You will find the ſame things ſometimes repeated, and in ſeveral places inſiſted on to much what the ſame purpoſe. Which I have permitted to be ſo rather than change the firſt Method; for in conſiderations ſo nearly allyed, as ſome of theſe are, it cannot be thought but the ſame Matter may come to be touched. And as to what concerns Church Communion, and Chriſtian Unity, I am ſo far from thinking it a Crime to repeat the Arguments and conſiderations proper for it, that I think the Temper of the Time, and the Humours of Men make it little leſs than neceſſary.

I have taken no care to alter the homely dreſs in which theſe things were at firſt delivered: Or to make them ſo fit for a Book as perhaps ſome would

expect.

expect. For to speak the truth, I have not had Time; and any that blame this neglect, I must beg them to consider what a daily task lyes upon his hands, that is, to make constant provisions for two Sermons a Week at the same place, besides other business, that I think few London *Ministers are free from.*

Such as it is I present to you, being not very solicitous what the event is as to my own reputation, If it be serviceable to you, or any others, it will turn to my account in the great day, and I shall rejoice and bless God, that honours me so far as to make me an Instrument of doing any Service, and any good in my Generation.

I pray God Almighty lead you into all truth, and make you obedient unto it, and grant you to feel the blessed and sweet effects of true Devotion, and to pass at last into the ravishments of it above. So prayeth

Your Obliged Friend, and

Servant in the Gospel,

H. Hesketh.

A Serious and Seaſonable

EXHORTATION

TO

Frequent Communion, &c.

THere hath ſcarce been an Age ſince the firſt commencing of Chriſtianity in the world, in which a plain Diſcourſe about the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper hath been more needful and ſeaſonable.

We follow an unhappy time of Diſorder and Confuſion, wherein the Conſtitutions of Religion were not only Profaned, but all her Hedges broken down, her ſacred Offices were invaded and polluted by Sacrilegious and Unhallowed hands, all her great Services and good Orders were neglected and contemned,

and her ſelf deſtroyed by thoſe that profeſſed the greateſt kindneſs to her.

The great Reformers of Chriſtianity were its plain Murtherers, and thoſe that pretended to refine it, the profeſt debauchers of it; who when they had reſolved to ſet up a new Heir were in prudence obliged (they thought) to ſlay the old; and having erected a new Form of Worſhip, muſt in honour to themſelves wholly throw down the old, leſt the Glory of it ſhould diſparage and ſhame their Novel Conſtitutions.

It fared no better with this great Miniſtry, and Service in Religion, than with the reſt. From being the Livery of a Chriſtian, it came to be the Badge of a party: From being thought a Duty incumbent upon all, it became a priviledge empaled and granted only to ſome, and the Prieſt inſtead of Inviting all to this Heavenly Feaſt, made it his buſineſs to Scare the moſt from it, under fear of poyſon. By which Artifice Men came in time to have loſt the Senſe of its being a Duty, and to have forgotten wholly the deſign and purport of it. And ſo a Church was ſet up without the uſe of Sacraments, and Salvation hoped for without the Commemorating of a Saviour; and this diſuſe ſo far prevailed, that you may meet with it in the Confeſſion of one of the great Rabbies of that time, yet living, That he had not Adminiſtred this Sacrament for eighteen years together.

When

When the great and merciful Providence of Heaven was pleaſed to put a ſtop to this ſad period of Diſorder and Irreligion, and to turn the Captivity of this poor Church, as the Rivers in the South. Then the Primitive Conſtitutions of it began to revive again, and by the favour of a good Prince, and excellent Laws, to ſhew themſelves, and obtain a reſpect again among us.

But it fared with them as with Wounded and Sick Perſons it commonly doth, the Wound though healed leaves a Scar, and the Sickneſs weakens the Conſtitution ever afterward; ſo alas! it is yet with the Conſtitutions of our Church, and the Ancient Sanctions of Religion, they look Pale and Wan to this day, and the Glory of the ſecond Houſe is ſhort of the firſt. And God only knows whether the Ancient good craſis, and beautiful complexion will ever be recover'd again or not.

But I think I may ſay it ſafely, there is no great Office of Religion that retains more marks of the late Diſtemper, nor feels more of the ſad effects of it, than this of the Holy Sacrament. It will not be eaſy (nor at this time needful) to number up all theſe. It may be (if God ſpare Life and Time in this place) you may in the proceſs of my Miniſtry have them all remarked.

At preſent I have propoſed to take notice only of three very great and capital ones.

The firſt diſcovers it ſelf in the great diſ-

regard and neglect of it, that is visible in many, and the very seldom observing it in those, that yet have some veneration for it.

The second appears in the Tenet of Transubstantiation, about which the Doctrines of Christianity have been so fiercely divided, and that which was intended as a cement and band of Union among Christians, is become the greatest make-bate, and stone of contention.

The third discovers it self in that mean esteem that some Men have of it, who look upon it only as a bare Symbol and Sign, and only a little bigger Ceremony of Christian Religion, upon which it comes to be disparaged and undervalued, to the no little scandal of Christian Religion, and the great dishonour of him that so solemnly Instituted the same.

Against all these things we may be furnished with some matter of Discourse from those Words of the Apostle in 1 *Cor.*11.26.in which I shall observe three great things in contradistinction to them.

1. The frequency of Communicating, Intimated in these words [*As often*] *as ye Eat and Drink.*

2. The matter that is Communicated in; *this Bread, this Cup.*

3. The great end and purpose of this Service; it is to shew forth the Lords Death till he come.

You

You will eaſily ſee what Influence theſe things have upon the forenamed Errors, and how Subſervient and Conducing they are to the rectifying of them. I pray God we may not defeat their effect, but experiment the benefit of them to theſe purpoſes.

CHAP. I.

Clearing the Senſe of the Words, and the reaſonableneſs of the preſent Collection from them, and propoſing three Arguments for the truth of it.

1. I Begin with the firſt, the frequency of Communicating in this great Service, which (I hope to make appear) is implyed plainly in [*the as often*] *As often as ye Eat this Bread and Drink this Cup.*

I confeſs, conſider the words barely as they lie, no ſuch thing is colligible from them; for the expreſſion ſeems only indefinite and ſuppoſitive, and perhaps in ſtrict ſpeaking amounts to no more than only this, When you Eat and Drink, ſuppoſing you to Eat and Drink, or at moſt, if you do often Eat and Drink, then ſo often you do ſo and ſo, *i. e.* ſhew forth the Lords Death.

But when we conſider the matter a little cloſer, we ſhall clearly perceive that frequency in Eating and Drinking is here ſuppoſed, and taken for granted (as it is certain, it was ſo indeed, as I ſhall ſhew you hereafter) and the prime deſign of the words is only to rectifie a miſtake, and reform an error in that common frequent practiſe, by acquainting them what was the end of that great Service.

It is certain the *Corinthians* did often Eat that Bread and Drink that Cup, *i.e.* a morſel of Bread, and a glaſs of Wine at the end of their Love Feaſts, which our Saviour had Tranſcribed from the *Jews* manner of Feaſting (as the Learned well know) and had heightened them into a great Sacrament. But it is very probable that they were not yet ſufficiently inſtructed in the reaſons and purpoſe of that Cuſtom, nor did know that this was a Solemn Sacramental action. And this is that which the Apoſtle informs them in, as a moſt powerful Argument, againſt that abuſe in theſe things, that was ſo common then among them.

So that his Deſign was not to enjoyn them to do this often, for that they did already, and there was no need of his doing it, but he takes that for granted and ſuppoſeth it. Only he deſigns to direct them how to do it, and to reform that Error that was in the doing of it.

It is juſt like ſome paſſages in our Saviours great

great Sermon in the Mount, which may give great light to the meaning of this Speech. Thoſe I mean are *Mat.* 6. 2, 3. 5. 6. *When thou doeſt thine Alms*, and when thou Prayeſt, *&c.* where we muſt not think that our Saviour relaxeth the Obligation to Alms, or Prayer, or leaves Men at liberty to do theſe when they pleaſe. No ſuch thing; but he ſuppoſeth Men ſenſible of the Obligation to theſe, and he finds their practice of them to be conſonant thereto. Only he gives them direction how to do them acceptably, and as they ſhould.

And we may take liberty to paraphraſe his Words thus; you often Faſt and give Alms, and Pray, and you do well. And I give no command as to this, go on, continue the practice of theſe excellent things, only let me caution you as to the manner of doing them, and direct you how they ought to be done.

Juſt thus we ought to underſtand, the Apoſtle in theſe words in the Text. His purpoſe is not to enjoyn frequency in this Service, becauſe there was no need of it, but only to direct them in a thing that would be of great advantage for them to know, and of effect to preſerve them from that abuſe in it, that was ſo Scandalous and Common among them, *q. d.* you often Eat this Bread and Drink this Cup, and you do this as if it were an ordinary and cuſtomary thing only, and therefore it is, that you are ſo careleſs about it, and therefore I muſt tell you that which I received

of the Lord Jeſus, namely, how he hath Conſecrated this into a great and Holy Sacrament. And therefore what abuſe you are guilty of in this, is a Diſhonour to the very Inſtitution of Chriſt, an injury to his very Body and Blood, of which theſe things are Sacred Symbols. I do not therefore go to diſcourage your frequency in theſe things; God forbid: Only I inform you of the end and purpoſe of them, that you may your ſelves preſently Judge, how Scandalous and Heinous, and very unbecoming theſe abuſes in them are to you.

But I ſhall proceed yet further to add to the reaſonableneſs of this Collection, from three plain Topicks or, Heads of Arguments.

1. The conſideration of what the *Corinthians* here practiſed, to which this whole Speech relates.

2. The Service it ſelf, and its Inſtitution.

3. The Nature, Ends and Purpoſes of it. All which will combine in ſhewing us, that frequency in this ſervice is really a Chriſtian Duty.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The first Argument from what the Corinthians *then did, to which this Speech relates, and wherein that great Abuse of theirs then consisted. Where something of the Love-Feast, and the Consequent Service is explained.*

1. I Consider the practice of these *Corinthians*, to which it is evident this Speech relates, and to the frequency of which this [*as often*] must Answer, and Correspond.

Now if we may judge by this, and if we may conclude that they did as often Eat and Drink Sacramentally, as they did Eat that Bread and Drink that Cup: Then we may certainly conclude, that they did it constantly, and every day that they met in Publick, at least every Lord's day certainly.

For our clearer understanding of which, I shall a little enlarge, or at least explain what I hinted before. And that I may be as distinct and plain as may be, I consider these two things, and the frequency of them 1. That which they used. 2. That which they abused in the close of these conventions.

1. The thing that they used and practised was the Ἀγάπη, as they called it, *i. e.* the Love Feast,

Feaſt. Of which I think it enough to give you this ſhort account.

The Primitive Chriſtians met every firſt day of the Week to break Bread, *i. e.* to Celebrate the Holy Sacrament. The Bread and Wine was taken out of the common Offertories of Chriſtians, who that day alſo uſed to make their contributions to the Poor, and to bring every Man as God had bleſſed him, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 16. 1. Out of all this a ſelect portion was taken for the Sacrament, and probably ſome laid up for the Poor. The ſurpluſage was ſpent in a Common Feaſt, in which the Poor were Refreſhed, and Feaſted with the Rich, and all Confederated together as Friends and Brethren, and received and ſaluted each other with a fervent Kiſs of Love. From whence they were called Ἀγάπαι, *Jude.* 12. Love-Feaſts, or Feaſts of Charity.

Theſe were continued in the Church for a conſiderable time, and always cloſed their Publick Services and Worſhip, eſpecially thoſe on the Lords day. And in the Primitive Conventions of the Apoſtles and their Converts, every day, as you read clearly in the *Acts* of the Apoſtles. Afterwards when Senſuality began to ſully the Glory of Chriſtianity, and to abuſe the moſt Innocent Conſtitutions, they grew into diſeſteem and diſuſe, and at laſt came to be laid quite aſide.

That I mention them for, is this: To ſhew that they were at this time uſed by the *Corinthians*,

rinthians, as is plain they were, by what is ſaid of their bringing their own Supper (*i. e.* theſe Offertories) in this Chap. And were uſed as in other Churches, *i. e.* conſtantly in the cloſe of their Lord's day Service.

2. And from this we may the eaſier apprehend what it was they abuſed in theſe Solemnities for which the Apoſtle here reproveth them.

The abuſe was plainly this: Every Man took his own Offertory, and the Portion that he brought, and ſo perverted this Feaſt from the end of it. From whence followed theſe two very ill effects beſide ſome others.

1. That ſome Men were intemperate and plainly drunk as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, and others were hungry and tempted to impatience and cenſuring the reſt. Things mighty unbecoming Chriſtians, and Scandalous to their Holy Profeſſion.

2. And which was ſomething worſe (if worſe could be) the ſubſequent Sacrament was ſure to be greatly profaned, and they wholly indiſpoſed for that Devotion and Reverence, that it was very needful it ſhould be performed with. But they would Eat it as Common Bread, and not diſcern it to be the Symbol of the Lord's Body. *i.e.* they would as irreverently and regardleſly Eat that piece of Bread that was Conſecrated, and drink that Cup that was bleſſed (therefore called ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας, the Cup of bleſſing, at the cloſe of this Feaſt, and

ſo

ſo became Sacramental,) as they did eat or drink before in the precedent Feaſt, and very likely would think it no more Holy, or Sacramental than they did the other portions; which error he doth in the words of this Text directly ſeek to rectify among them.

By the Conſideration of all which, we may gain thus much, that if the Celebration of the Sacrament among them, was as frequent as this other Cuſtom was, if they did Sacramentally eat and drink, as often as they did eat that bread, and drink that Cup, in the cloſe of their Love-Feaſts. Then this was a ſtated conſtant part of their Lords day Service and Devotion. For thoſe Feaſts were always obſerved on the Lords day, and ſometimes every day, but always on many other ſolemn Feſtival days beſide.

It is poſſible we might gain yet ſome more ſtrength to our preſent purpoſe by conſidering that Cuſtom of ſuch a piece of Bread, and ſuch a Cup in the cloſe of all the Jewiſh Feaſts, and obſerving the Correſpondency between this and that, in this inſtance. For the Antitype ſhould anſwer to the Type, and by conſidering how it was with the one, we may know how it ought to be with the other.

It is ſufficiently notorious, and obſerved by all Learned Men, how moſt (if not all) the Chriſtian Inſtitutions were traduced from ſome Cuſtoms and Practices among the Jews. For our

Saviour,

Saviour, being their *Meſſiah*, in the firſt place, was mighty deſirous, as much as might be, to endear himſelf to them, and by all means to give them as little offence in his Conſtitutions as was poſſible, and therefore hath retained ſome of their great Cuſtoms, and adopted them into his own Law, and heightned them into the moſt Solemn and Holy Sacraments.

This is clear in Baptiſm, which was derived from the Jewiſh Practice of admitting Proſelites. And it is no leſs clear and evident in this other Holy Sacrament.

It was a conſtant Cuſtom in all the Jewiſh Feaſts for one (called therefore the Maſter of the Feaſt) in the beginning of the Feaſt to Bleſs and Conſecrate a Loaf of Bread, ſaying a Benediction over it, and after to give to each one a ſmall Morſel of it, and then every Man feeds as he pleaſeth. And in the cloſe of the Feaſt to take a Glaſs of Wine, ſaying, Sirs, let us bleſs his Name, with whoſe bleſſings we have been filled, then to bleſs the Cup, and pray for Peace, then to drink of it himſelf, and give to all the reſt to drink after him.

Now it is plain, this Cuſtom our bleſſed Lord retained and ſublimated it into a Holy Myſtery, and made it the Symbol of Feaſting upon that great Sacrifice of his Body and Blood. In every other Circumſtance the Analogy ſtands exact. And therefore ſhould

do

do ſo in this too, and anciently was always practiſed accordingly.

Now if the Celebration of this Sacrament muſt anſwer its Type in this: Then it muſt be at leaſt as often as any Feaſt is Celebrated in the Chriſtian Church, for this Cuſtom always attended all the Jewiſh Feaſts. And therefore the Antitype to it ſhould be ſo too in all Chriſtian Feaſts.

And it will not prejudice this Truth to ſay, that now this Chriſtian Feaſt is ceaſed, and therefore this can be no meaſure, to us in this thing now: For the Chriſtian Church hath its Feſtivalls ſtill. And the Reaſons of them continue the ſame ſtill, the bleſſings Commemorated in them are as truly great and valuable, and as fit cauſe of rejoycing before the Lord, and offering Solemn Praiſe to him, as ever they were.

And accordingly the Church recommends the Obſervation of them, and calls them ſometimes Feſtival days, and ſometimes Holydays, and enjoyns the Communion Service upon them all, and therefore doubtleſs would gladly have the thing it ſelf to attend its own Service.

Among theſe, the Lord's day is worthily counted chief, and perhaps it may be no very wide Conjecture to think this one Reaſon of that Denomination, and that it might be called the Lord's day from its reſpect to this Symbol, and Solemn Commemorating of him, which anciently was a conſtant part of this days Service,

Service, as well as from the Reſurrection, in Memory of which, this was Conſecrated into the Chriſtian Sabbath.

However if we let this paſs only for a Conjecture, yet the other will yield us ſome ſteddy Advantage to our purpoſe. And if there muſt be a juſt Analogy between this and that Cuſtom among the Jews, from whence it derived, it muſt be very frequent, and ſo frequent at leaſt, as the Chriſtian Church obſerves any ſolemn Feſtival. Which will not only be every Lord's day, but very many times in the year beſide.

This is the firſt Argument; and if it ſeem a little more abſtracted, and the force of it not ſo very plain to every common Underſtanding, I ſhall be a great deal more plain and eaſily Underſtood in thoſe that follow.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

The third Argument urged and driven to its full force by four Propoſitions. The firſt Propoſition explained. And this Service ſhewed to be plainly and expreſly Commanded and Inſtituted by our Saviour.

THE Second Argument for our purpoſe is to conſider the Service it ſelf and its Inſtitution; and the Argument that I intend from this, I ſhall endeavour to draw to its iſſue, by a Complication of ſome dependent Obſervations, which I beg the ſerious Conſideration of. And they are theſe that follow.

1. I obſerve that this Duty is as plainly commanded, as any poſitive Inſtitution can.

2. I conſider that this is no temporary Inſtitution, but to laſt while the Chriſtian Religion continueth.

3. That it is no more limited and confined to particular times, than other Duties are.

4. That accordingly it was underſtood and obſerved by the Apoſtles and Primitive Chriſtians. All which taken together, will I ſuppoſe be another mighty Argument for the frequency of Communicating in this Service.

1.

1. I begin with the firſt. Which is to Conſider that this Duty is plainly and expreſly Commanded by our Saviour. And this I am certain will be plain enough to any that Conſiders two places in the *N. T.* which are all I ſhall appeal to in this matter. One is in St. *Lukes* Goſpel, the other is in this Chapter.

That of St. *Luke* is Chapter 22. 19. *And he took Bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, ſaying, This is my Body which is given for you, this do in Remembrance of me.* That theſe Words relate to the Inſtitution of this Holy Sacrament, was never yet (that I know of) queſtioned by any, and in Truth, the thing is ſo plain that there needs no Contending about it.

And if they do this, then they contain an expreſs Command for the Celebration of it [*Do This*] *i. e. which you now ſee me do, do you take bread and bleſs it, and break it, and give it to others to Eat in Remembrance of me.* I do not well ſee how the ſenſe of any Command, can be more obvious and plain than this is.

And I cannot imagine what can be thought of to defeat the effect of this command, or be pretended why it ſhould not perpetually oblige all Chriſtians. But one or both of theſe two things. 1. That this precept was only

given to the Apoſtles, and ſo may not concern Private Chriſtians. Or 2. that it was given only to Jews, and ſo perhaps may only concern them.

Both which things I confeſs are very true, but the deductions from them wholly groundleſs and falſe. For if they were given only to the Apoſtles, as indeed they are, then they are a plain command to them to Adminiſter this Sacrament, and therefore an Obligation upon others to receive it. And we might as well ſay the Apoſtles only were Obliged to be Baptiſed, becauſe it is only ſaid to them, Baptiſe, as we can ſay they only were concerned to Communicate, becauſe it is ſaid to them only do this in remembrance of me.

It rather concludes quite the other way, that becauſe the Apoſtles are commanded to Adminiſter, Chriſtians are obliged to Communicate, and to be Adminiſtred unto. And I do not know why we may not as ſafely inferr this, as we may that Chriſtians are Obliged to hear the Word Preached, and to be Baptiſed, becauſe the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors are to Baptiſe and Preach.

And then, that it ſhould not concern the generality of Chriſtians becauſe it was firſt Adminiſtred only to the Jews, is a wild way of Arguing, that may (for ought I know) defeat

defeat all the Precepts and Inſtitutions of the Goſpel, it being certain all of them were firſt delivered only to that People. But I think no Man is ſo extravagant as to urge it in all other things. And yet I ſee not why he may not as well do it in them, as in this.

But to take off all manner of pretence upon either of theſe grounds, I proceed to conſider the other place of Scripture that I mentioned. And that is, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23, 24, 25. *For I have Received of the Lord that which I alſo delivered unto you, that the Lord Jeſus in the ſame night that he was betrayed, took Bread;*

And when he had given Thanks he Brake it, and ſaid, Take Eat, this is my Body which is Broken for you, this do in Remembrance of me.

After the ſame manner alſo he took the Cup, when he had Supped, ſaying, This Cup is the New Teſtament in my Blood; this do ye, as oft as ye Drink it in Remembrance of me.

From which Words, together with the purpoſe to which St. *Paul* uſeth them, theſe two things are abundantly plain: 1. That Chriſtians in common were concerned in this Inſtitution, as well as the Apoſtles. And 2. That Gentile Chriſtians were obliged unto it as well as the Jewiſh. For he ſpeaks theſe things to the whole Church of *Corinth*, who were neither Apoſtles nor Jews only.

It is moſt evident that our Lord deſigned him eſpecially, for the Apoſtle of the Gentiles, to propagate that Faith among them, which St. *Peter* firſt Preached to the Firſt-fruits of them, and to Build up that Church among them, which St. *Peter* laid the firſt Stone of in his Miniſtry to *Cornelius* and his Houſe. And he tells us plainly, that among other things, which he received of the Lord Jeſus in order to this great Work, this was one: That this Sacrament ſhould be obſerved by all Chriſtians, as a Solemn, Commemorative Rite of the Death of Chriſt, and of the great benefits which we receive thereby, as our Church ſpeaks in this very caſe.

This is plain, if any thing can be ſo. This he had in Charge from the Lord Jeſus, and it was one of the great Inſtructions he received from him, when he made him his Apoſtle to the Gentiles, and directed him what to Teach and Inſtitute among them.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The Second Propoſition. The nature of Temporary Inſtitutions conſidered; how to judge when any Inſtitution is ſo: And the Sacrament ſhewed not to be any ſuch.

SEcondly, I conſider, that this is no Temporary Inſtitution, but to laſt while the Chriſtian Religion endureth in the World. In ſpeaking to this Argument, and clearing the Force and Strength of it to the meaneſt Underſtanding, I ſhall do theſe two things.

1. Explain fully what I mean by a Temporary Precept or Inſtitution.

2. Shew that this is not ſo, but quite the contrary.

1. I begin with the firſt, and I call that a Temporary Inſtitution, which is but appointed for a certain Period of Time only, and when that time is expired the obligation of it expires too. There are many ſuch things appointed by the Laws of Men, the obligation to which Laws is limited, and confined to ſuch and ſuch a time, as the prudence of Men think fit, or their reaſon inclines them to think, the reaſon of the thing may continue ſo long.

And so there may be some Institutions in a Religion which rely upon reasons that may vary and change, or wholly expire in tract of time; and then no Man doubts but the obligation to them ceaseth, and Men are free from farther respect unto them.

Such, for Instance, were some Institutions of our Saviour to his Apostles, which particuticularly concerned them as Apostles, and were directions to them in the Discharge of their Apostolical Office, only during the Minority of the Church: Or their Travail and Pains in founding of it: But no Man thinks they were intended as standing Rules to oblige their Successors for ever, yea or to oblige them, when the reason and temper of things changed with them. Such as that, *Luke* 10. 4. *Carry neither Purse, nor Scrip, nor Shoos*; and, *Salute no Man by the way.* And that *Luke* 12. 11. *When you are carried before Rulers take no thought before hand, what you shall say.* And some others may be met with of the like nature, which it is certain did only oblige the Apostles, and continue in force when that present State of affairs lasted, but did cease to oblige, when the reasons of them ceased also.

And such are a great many that you may meet with in St. *Paul's* Epistles, and others, which are given only to the Jews, with respect to the Gentiles, or the Gentiles with respect to the Jews, and were Directions what to do in some Instances, while that distinction

on among Chriſtians laſted, and while Men were not ſufficiently inſtructed in the obligation, or the Nulling of it. And ſuch doubtleſs were thoſe Conſtitutions of the Apoſtolical Council, *Acts* 15. which were called neceſſary, and ſo indeed were while things ſtood in that Poſture that they did then. —— But after a Century or two began to grow into neglect, when the reaſons of them ceaſed, and all Men were ſufficiently Inſtructed in the Nature of ſuch things. And no Men doubt now, but that they may Eat Blood, and things ſtrangled, without Sin, unleſs it be a few Rabbinical Men, and ſome others tinctured with Judaiſm, in other Inſtances as well as this.

Now if we would know how to judge rightly, when an Inſtitution is thus Temporary, and diſtinguiſh it from things of Perpetual Obligation; the beſt way that I know of is this: To conſider well of what Nature the reaſons of thoſe Inſtitutions are. If the reaſons annexed to the Precept, be of Moral and Perpetual Equity, then the Obligation is ſo too: But if it be not, but the Equity and Reaſonableneſs of it limited only to ſuch and ſuch conditions, and can be thought to be fit and becoming only, while the Circumſtances of Things continue the ſame as they are now, then we may certainly conclude, that the Inſtitution is not deſigned to be perpetually obliging, but only during ſuch a Period, and

till the reaſons of Things ſhall change. As for Inſtance, to make this more plain, if God ſhall Command a Man to abſtain from Blood out of reſpect to a Jew, who may be offended by it, as being not ſufficiently inſtructed in the Goſpel Liberty; I am ſure that Command obligeth me only while that reaſon continueth with me; but when there is no Jew to be offended, nor any but what are as well inſtructed as my ſelf, in the Nature of the thing, I doubt not but the Obligation of that Precept ceaſeth.

But when God Commands me at the ſame time to abſtain from Fornication, and lets me know the inconvenience and miſchief of it to human Society, I am able then to aſſure my ſelf that this Command is of perpetual Obligation, becauſe the ſame reaſon upon which it is forbidden now, will continue ſtill, while Men live in this World; and therefore what makes it needful now, will make it to be ſo for ever too. Theſe things, I think, are enough to inſtruct us ſufficiently in the Nature of Temporary Inſtitutions, and things of perpetual Obligation, and teach us how to know, when Precepts are of one kind, and when of the other. And by a due conſideration of them we ſhall be able to inform our ſelves in the

2. Second thing, That the Inſtitution of this Holy Sacrament is not Temporary, I mean, Temporary with reſpect to Chriſtian Religion, but to laſt and oblige Chriſtians as long as

as this Religion lasteth, and obligeth them to any thing.

And this I shall prove from two things said of the reason of it in this Text. 1. That it is to shew forth the Lord's Death. 2. To doe this till he come; *As often as ye Eat this Bread*, &c. *ye do shew forth the Lord's Death till he come.* I have proposed (if you do remember) to speak to these in the third general I have observed in the Text, and therefore shall not anticipate here what will be more proper then, with any large Explication of the Sense and Purport of them. I only here urge them in general, as an Argument for what I am proving, That this is not any Temporary Institution.

For, First, The reason of its Institution will always continue the same, and whatever Gratitude, and Joy, and Praise, is fit and due from Christians now unto God Almighty, for the Death of his Son, will be equally so to the End of all things, yea to Eternity too. And whatever Obligation lyeth upon Christians now, to Commemorate the Death of the Blessed Jesus, and to tell Men the Wonders and Blessings that accrue to Mankind by it, the same will continue, and be incumbent on them all the while they are Christians, and converse with Men in this World.

Nay, perhaps this reason will encrease and strengthen upon their hands. For, as now, at the End of Sixteen Hundred Years, there

there is more need to Commemorate, and Imprint upon our own and other Mens thoughts, the remembrance of the ſame, then there could reaſonably be thought to be in the firſt Century, when it was but lately paſt, and yet freſh and warm in Mens thoughts. So this reaſon will be ſtronger a Thouſand Years hence than now, if the World laſt ſo long, and ſo proportionably to the final Conflagration. The further that Men are removed from the time of this Death, and all the ſurprizing Accidents of it, the more danger is there, that the thoughts of it may wear off, and the Memory of it ſlip away, and conſequently the reaſon of this Inſtitution will be ſo far from ceaſing, that it ſtill grows ſtronger by Tract of Time, and in every ſucceeding Period gains more ſtrength, and makes the Duty the more needful.

Eſpecially Secondly, When it is expreſsly ſaid this ſhould be done till our Lord come, *i. e.* till he come again to Judge the World, and to put an end to the preſent Frame and Syſteme of things, and to give up the Government of his Church to his Father, from whom he received it.

For, That this is the ſenſe and meaning of the ἄχρις ἧς ἔλθῃ, *Till he come*, here, I have the joynt ſuffrage of all the Expoſitors I have yet ſeen, yea, of the Socinians too, whom I did not expect to find ſo very frank in this thing.

There

There is a Sect of Enthuſiaſtical Men ſprung up among us, in the late time of Unhappineſs and Confuſion, who make quite another Interpretation of this expreſſion, referring it to I do not know what kind of Chriſts coming into Mens Hearts, after which they ſay there is no need of this, and ſuch like Childiſh and mean Ordinances. Till this indeed they will grant ſome need of ſuch things, *i.e.* while Men are Children, then they may act like ſuch, but when Chriſt comes to be revealed in them, then they commence Men, and muſt put away Childiſh things, and be above ſuch low and beggarly Inſtitutions, *i.e.* in plain terms, when they come to attain to the Perfection of Quakers.

But I think it too great an honour to ſuch a dotage to ſtay upon the Confutation of it. That which the Apoſtles themſelves, and the beſt Chriſtians then, that had the Spirit in great meaſures, and to whom Chriſt was made known in ſo Eminent a degree, did obſerve, and counted a Duty incumbent on them, I will believe a Duty upon all, and upon theſe high pretenders too, unleſs I could ſee ſome reaſon to induce me to think, that the Apoſtles, and beſt Men yet in the Chriſtian World, have been but Punies and Petties to theſe Opinionated Perfectioniſts.

But I ſtay too long to remark ſuch dotages. It is certain and plain then, from theſe words in the Inſtitution, that this Duty is to be

be incumbent upon Men to the end of the World, and to the Final Expiration of Chriſtianity in it, till Chriſt come to turn Faith into Viſion, and Hope into Fruition, and to reward the Pious Services of all his Saints, with Eternal weights of inconceivable Glory.

Then indeed the reaſon of the Duty will ceaſe. We ſhall not need Symbols, to put us in mind of that which we ſhall then ſee. We ſhall need no Art to impreſs our Memories with the Idea of that, which our ſenſes ſhall continually repreſent to us.

We ſhall not need to eat Material Bread, as a Symbolical Repreſentation of the Heavenly, we ſhall then taſte the living Bread from Heaven, and feed at the Supper of the Lamb, and eternally ſolace and refreſh our ſelves with that great Love-Feaſt, between Saints and Angels, and their Bleſſed Head.

We ſhall no longer have occaſion for Types and Symbols, and be fain to take up with Husks and Figures, for we ſhall enjoy the ſubſtance, we ſhall ſee as we are now ſeen, and we ſhall poſſeſs what we now enjoy but by Hope, and the excellent Arts of Faith, by which we bring things near us, that are really at a diſtance, and by Imagination make thoſe things preſent, which are only future and in reverſion.

Then (as I ſaid but now) the reaſon of this Service will ceaſe, and conſequently the Service it ſelf too. But till then it will continue

tinue the ſame, or rather in every more diſtant period of the World, grow ſtronger, and therefore ſo long the Obligation to the ſame will continue alſo.

I ſhall caſt in one thing *ex abundanti* on this Argument, to ſhew that this is intended to be a fixed, ſtanding Service in Chriſtianity, namely becauſe it is almoſt the only thing, that is peculiar to this Religion. For there are but three things that can properly be ſaid to be Inſtitutions of Chriſtianity; Baptiſm, the Supper of the Lord, and calling upon God in Chriſts name.

Theſe are the peculiar Signatures and Cogniſances of a Chriſtian, and things by which he is diſtinguiſhed from all the World. The reſt of our Religion is but in common with others, and is little elſe but the old Natural Patriarchal Religion, more Refined and Sublimated than it was. But theſe Services are peculiarly inſtituted by Chriſt Jeſus, and are practiſed by no other Mode or Denomination of Religion in the World.

From whence we may ſafely draw an Argument for the aſſuring the Truth of our preſent Propoſition, that it is no temporary Inſtitution, but deſign'd to be a ſtanding Service, as long as Chriſtian Religion laſts in the World.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The Third and Fourth Propoſitions. Wherein is ſhewed that this Service is no more limited to any Particular Time than any other Service in Chriſtianity; And that it was accordingly underſtood and practiſed by the Apoſtles and Primitive Chriſtians, as a ſtanding part of their Publick Service and Worſhip.

3. BUt to advance yet nearer to our purpoſe, I obſerve in the third place, That this Duty is no more limited to this or that Particular Time, than any other poſitive Inſtitution in Chriſtianity is. But for any thing we ſee in the Inſtitution, is intended to be made a ſtanding part of Chriſtian Worſhip.

There ſeem to me to be two Circumſtances in the Command pertinent to be obſerved by us as to this matter.

1. The propoſing of it without any deſignation of Time for it.

2. The Phraſe that it is expreſſed by.

1. It is plain, That no one particular Time is deſigned or marked out for the Celebration of this Service, only it is ſaid, *Do this in remembrance of me.* And if any Men therefore

therefore conclude, That our Saviour hath left this to every Mans diſcretion, to obſerve it when, or how often he pleaſeth; and that it is a ſufficient ſatisfying the Command, if he now and then only, once or twice in his whole Life do communicate; he may be told that he plainly prevaricates the ſenſe of the Precept in it.

It is more than probable, That if our Saviour had intended that this Service ſhould be obſerved in the Chriſtian Synaxes and Conventions only at ſome particular Times and Seaſons, he would have told us ſo, and ſome way or other have marked out thoſe times, that we might have known them; but we are ſure he hath not done the leaſt of this; which is a very good Argument to prove, that he did intend this to be a ſtanding part of the Chriſtian Publick Worſhip to the end of the World.

And upon the ſame reaſon that Men take a liberty to do this but ſeldom, when they pleaſe, becauſe Chriſt hath not expreſly told them when and how often they ſhould do it, they may take the liberty to pray, and meet together in Publick to Worſhip him, only when they pleaſe too. For it is certain he hath no more ſtated the times for theſe Services than he hath done for this. He ſaith only when you pray, and the Apoſtle ſaith when you come together. But we do not conclude from either of theſe, that we may

therefore

therefore pray, or worſhip God in publick as ſeldom as we pleaſe. And yet we may as rationally do both theſe, as conclude becauſe we are not expreſly told how often we are to do this, that therefore we are at liberty, and it is indifferent when we do it.

It is a known Rule in Law, *In omnibus obligationibus ubi dies non ponitur præſenti debetur* All Obligations are ſolvent and payable at preſent, where a particular time for payment is not mentioned. And I think it may be as true a Rule in Divinity, That all Religious Duties, and parts of Publick Worſhip, that have not their particular ſeaſons marked out by God himſelf, ſhould be obſerved and practiſed frequently at leaſt, and as often as opportunity of doing them offers it ſelf to Men.

Natural Light and Reaſon alone will tell Men that they ought to be conſtant in their Devotions to Almighty God, upon whom their dependance, and from whom their receipts of favours are conſtant, andthat no day ſhould paſs without the Morning and Evening Sacrifice.

And Revelation hath told Men that one day at leaſt in every ſeven is very fit to be dedicated to Gods Publick Worſhip. And both theſe will tell us, that whatever God hath appointed as a part of his Publick Worſhip, ought conſtantly to be obſerved by Men when they meet together for that purpoſe, unleſs

he

he himſelf, or the reaſon of the thing tell them otherwiſe.

We ought not to ſuffer one part of Publick Worſhip to turn ingroſſer and ſteal our regards from the reſt. We ought not to ſet up one in oppoſition to another, nor think that the obſervation of one may be commuted, or attone for the neglect of the other. Some Men ſet up Preaching in Oppoſition to Prayer, and ſome would have Prayers to ſuperſede Preaching, but almoſt both ſorts make theſe to ſuperſede Communicating.

I do not know for my part, how to diſtinguiſh between the Error and Guilt of theſe Men: I think all equally Prevaricate the Divine Inſtitutions, and rob God of that which he hath moſt expreſsly required of them.

2. The ſecond thing obſervable in this Inſtitution pertinent to our preſent purpoſe, is the Symbol under which the great benefit of this Duty is repreſented, and that is by Eating and Drinking; As often as ye Eat this Bread and Drink this Cup. In alluſion to which it is called the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Church tells you what is the real ſignification of this Allegory, and what the intendment of this Service is, *viz.* the ſtrengthning and refreſhing of our Souls by the Body and Blood of Chriſt, as our Bodies are by the Bread and Wine: *i.e.* God Almighty intended that our Souls ſhould be advantaged and ſtrengthned

by the Graces in this Service, as really as our Bodies are by the Symbols of them.

Now hence we may draw another excellent Argument for our present purpose. For if this be part of that Provision that our great Lord hath made for the Souls of his Servants, be that Food which he hath provided for his Family the Church, and hath charged his Stewards to give to them; we may strongly infer; that as the one ought to make constant Provision: So the other ought as constantly to partake of it.

The necessites of the Soul are as real and pressing as those of the Body are, or can be: And they can no more subsist without frequent and constant supplies of Grace, than our Bodys can without daily Food. As long as we live in this state here below, we shall have continual need to grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: To renew our strength to do our Duty, and to master all Temptations that would hinder us from doing so: To strengthen our pious purposes, and heighten the sense of our manifold Obligations to our God: To impregnate our Souls with a lively sense of his goodness and Love, and to heighten our Joy and Praise unto him, and since this Holy Sacrament is a most excellent Expedient and help to all these great purposes, one would think, it might supersede all need of any other Arguments, to oblige us to a frequent partaking

taking of the ſame. Our neceſſities here alone might ſufficiently inſtruct us, and ſhew us, that our Spiritual repaſts ſhould be as conſtant as our Bodily.

4. And that this was the purpoſe and intendment of this Precept, the Practice of thoſe that beſt underſtood it ſhews plainly. Which is the fourth thing I propoſed to obſerve in this Inſtitution; *viz.* that it was thus Underſtood and Practiſed by the Apoſtles and Primitive Chriſtians: Who always accounted it a conſtant principal Part of Divine Worſhip, and accordingly obſerved it.

What the Senſe and Practice of the Apoſtles was as to this, appears clearly from what St. *Luke* tells us, *Acts* 2.46. They continued daily in the Temple with one accord, and breaking Bread from houſe to houſe, did Eat their Meat with gladneſs and ſingleneſs of Heart, Praiſing God and having favour with the People; *i. e.* (as one among our ſelves paraphraſeth theſe Words) after they had daily performed their Devotion with the Jews in the Temple Service, they went to their own Houſes (*i. e.* thoſe οἴκους, that they had in them, places for Divine Service and Prayer) there to tender a more particular Service to their Saviour as they were Chriſtians; *i. e.* to celebrate the Holy Sacrament (which is uſually called Breaking of Bread) and to give Solemn Praiſes and Thanks to him.

And that they did this conſtantly when they

met together for Publick Worſhip, the fourth Verſe of that Chapter ſhews plainly. They continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles Doctrine (or hearing the Apoſtolical Inſtruction) and Fellowſhip (or Communicating one to another) and Breaking Bread, and in Prayer. Where you ſee this is joyned with the other Solemn parts of Divine Worſhip, and ſaid always when they met to accompany them.

Theſe two Texts ſeem to intimate that this was a conſtant part in the daily Service, and truly I believe it was ſo. But that it was conſtantly a part of the *Sunday* or Lord's day Service; is plainly affirmed, *Acts* 20. 7. *And on the firſt day of the Week, when the Diſciples were come together to break Bread*; *i. e.* to celebrate the Holy Sacrament, as all Expoſitors unanimouſly underſtand it.

And the ſame ſeems intimated by our Apoſtle in Verſe 20. of this 11. Chapter of 1 Cor. *When you come together therefore into one place* (as always on the Lord's day to be ſure they did) *this is not to Eat the Lord's Supper* (*i. e.* as you ought to Eat it.) The Syriack Verſion of theſe Words is plainer to our purpoſe; When you come together, this is not to Eat and Drink as becomes the Lord's day. But whether it be Κυριακὸν, *the Lord's day*, or Κυριακὸν, *the Lord's Body*, it is much what the ſame to our preſent purpoſe, and ſhews us thus much, that to Eat the Lord's Body (*i. e.* to Celebrate

brate the Sacrament) was one ſtanding Service in their Publick Conventions.

Thus it was while the Apoſtles lived, and that thus it was alſo in the Ages immediately ſucceeding we learn clearly from undoubted Records of the Practice of thoſe times. I might eaſily heap together a multitude of Teſtimonies to this purpoſe: But I will content my ſelf to extract a few that are the more undoubted and remarkable, and commonly cited by Learned Men to this purpoſe.

Juſtin Martyr, who lived about the middle of the ſecond Century, deſcribing the Publick Service and Worſhip of Chriſtians in his time, gives us this account of the *Sunday* Service: " On that day there is a meeting of all " that dwell in Town and Country, and the " Reader having done his Office, the Preſi- " dent makes an Oration, wherein he exhor- " teth People to imitate ſuch goodly things. " Then we all riſe and Pray, and (as I ſaid before, *i. e.* before he had been ſpeaking of the Celebration of the Sacrament) " at the end " of Prayer, Bread, Wine and Water, are " brought forth, and the Prieſt with all his " might poureth out Prayers and Praiſes and " the People anſwereth aloud, *Amen*, and " there is a diſtribution made of thoſe things, " over which Thanks have been given to every " one that is preſent, and to the abſent is ſent " by the Deacons.

There are many excellent uſes may be

made of this account, in order to the vindicating the Service of the Church of *England*, and ſhewing how exactly conſonant it is to Primitive Antiquity and Practice. But that to our preſent purpoſe is plain, that the Celebration of this Holy Sacrament was a conſtant part in the Sunday Service.

And that you may not imagine this Practice owed it ſelf only to the extraordinary fervors of Primitive Zeal, but continued a ſtanding Practice in the Church, *Socrates* the Hiſtorian, that wrote about the middle of the fifth Century, ſhews plainly, telling us that all Churches all the World over in every Week on the Sabbath day, Celebrate the Communion. And though he take notice of a contrary Cuſtom that began then in the Church of *Rome* and *Alexandria* (for no reaſon that we know of) to the contrary, yet St. *Hierom*, who lived about the ſame time, tells us, that at *Rome* he found plain footſteps of daily Communion in that Church : But were it not ſo, it ſhews us whence the diſuſe of this Sacrament firſt aroſe, and that we may call it more truly a Piece of Popery, than we do many things at this day.

This Cuſtom was thought ſo very reaſonable, and ſo agreeable to Apoſtolick Practice, and the reaſons of Chriſtianity, that it paſs'd into a Law, and was eſtabliſht as a Canon, in the Apoſtolical Canons, and in the Council of *Antioch* too ; both which Decree, that the Faithful

Faithful which enter the Church, and hear the Scriptures, but do not ſtay out the Prayers, nor receive the Holy Communion, ought to be Excommunicate, as diſturbers of the Church and violaters of its conſtant Uſage and Cuſtoms.

I will add but one Teſtimony more: But it is the more conſiderable, coming from an Enemy, though a very ingenious one: 'Tis that famous Epiſtle of *Plinius Secundus* to the Emperor *Trajan*, who being wearied with the perſecutions of the Chriſtians, and as it is thought to mitigate the rigor of the Imperial Edicts againſt them, gives this account of their Conventions: They are wont to aſſemble before it is light, to Sing an Hymn to Chriſt as God, and to bind themſelves with a Sacrament, not to do any Wickedneſs, but that they would not commit Murders, nor Thefts, nor Adulteries, nor break their Words, nor deny any thing that was depoſited in truſt with them, when it was demanded of them —— and when this was done to depart, and meet again together to partake of a common Meal. In which he alludes certainly to the Love-feaſts which were at night, and the Communion was always the Cloſe of them. So that it ſeems in thoſe times of Perſecution and Danger, the Sacrament was received twice every day. And ſo *Tertullian* tells us it was in their morning Conventions, as well as time of their Feaſt in Evening.

These are enough to shew us what Primitive Practice as to this was. I mention them to drive this Argument to a full Issue, and shew how strongly and unanswerably it concludes for the frequent and constant Celebration of this Service. And I am so confident in saying it doth so, that I but beg Men only to consider it in order to a full Conviction. For I am sure it is not lyable to any just Exception to weaken the Conclusiveness of it.

CHAP. VI.

The third head of Arguments propounded; wherein the Nature of this Service is shewed; and it is considered as an Act of Worship to God; in what respects it is so, and the Argument improved from that Consideration.

3. I Proceed now to the third Argument for the frequency of Communicating in this Service, and the often Eating this Bread, and Drinking this Cup: Which I proposed from the Consideration of the Nature and Ends of the same. From whence we may draw so many mighty Arguments for the frequency of this Duty.

1. I

1. I ſhall conſider the Nature of this Service. And he that doth ſo cannot but preſently conſider that it is an act of Religious Worſhip: A Service which the Chriſtian Religion enjoyns, as a peculiar Inſtance of Worſhip to God and Chriſt.

It is certain all ſacrifices under the Law were accounted Myſterious Rites of Divine Worſhip, and were eſteemed Solemn ways of paying Service and Homage unto God, and ſo to Sacrifice and to Worſhip, were not only in the Idiom of Scripture, but in other Languages too, the ſame thing.

I do not ſay the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is formally an expiatory Sacrifice, as the Papiſts do, nor Celebrating of it a real Offering up, or Sacrificing the very Body and Blood of Chriſt, as they contend, or a daily repeating that great *Hilaſterion*, and Treſpaſs Offering, that was Offered by Chriſt himſelf upon the Croſs, to make the great Atonement for the Sins of the World. For that our Bleſſed Lord himſelf declared to be perfected, and conſummated on the Croſs, and that the Author to the *Hebrews* tells us was but once offered up, *Heb.* 9. 28. and in many other places of that excellent Epiſtle, in which he undertakes to ſhew the excellency and efficacy of that Sacrifice of Chriſt, above any that *Aaron*, or the Prieſts of his Order offered. For whereas thoſe Sacrifices were every day repeated, and the moſt Sacred and Expiatory

once

once every year; this Sacrifice was to be offered up but once, and by that Solemn Oblation Christ hath perfected for ever them that are Sanctified, *Heb.* 10. 14. *i. e.* hath done all that by way of Expiation was to be done for them.

In which word, saith the Learned *Capellus*, there are two excellent Arguments for us. One against the Jews, to shew the excellency of this Sacrifice above all those of the *Aaronical* Priesthood, because it alone, and by being once only offered too, did effect that great Expiation, which all those Sacrifices, though continually iterated, and renewed, were not able to do.

And against the Papists too. Because the Apostle is arguing the Perfection of that Sacrifice above the others from this *Medium*, that whereas they needed to be offered daily, this was offered up but only once. Which Argument the Papists wholly destroy, by pretending a necessity, and a reality of their repeating this Service daily.

And yet for all this, it may be called the Christian Sacrifice, *i.e.* a Commemorative Sacrifice, as the Fathers generally speak; because we do in this Service feed upon those things, which are the Symbols of this real Sacrifice, or we do (as the Jews after the Actual Oblation of their Sacrifices) feed upon a Sacrifice, *i. e.* we feed upon that which we offer up unto God, as our Eucharistical

or

or Peace-offering, our great Thankſgiving for Gods accepting this great Treſſpaſs Offering of his Sons Blood, by which we are reconciled now to God, and at Peace with him.

Anſwerable to which Notion we know the Chriſtian Church hath uſually and anciently called this, *the Euchariſt*, *i. e.* her great Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving to God for that Expiatory Sacrifice of his Son, but never, that I find, that very Sacrifice it ſelf. According to which the Church of *England*, in her Collect after the Sacrament beggs God to accept this her Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving.

And it is further obſervable, that thoſe Fathers and Learned Men of the Ancient Church, that make it to refer immediately to this Expiatory Sacrifice of Chriſt, do when they ſpeak plainly on this Subject, as Doctors and Divines, and not as Orators, *&c.* make it only the Symbol and Repreſentation, or the Commemorative Rite of the ſame. St. *Chryſoſtom* upon that Text in the *Hebrews* that I laſt quoted, *viz.* Chap. 9. 14. propoſeth this Scruple, What then, doe not we daily offer this Sacrifice? Yes we doe, *i. e.* Ἀνάμνησιν ποιοῦμεν αὐτοῦ θάνατον, *We daily Sacrifice in Memory of it.* And again, Τῷ αὐτῷ ἀεὶ ποιοῦμεν, μᾶλλον δὲ ἀνάμνησιν ἐργαζόμεθα θυσίας, *We daily and conſtantly thus Sacrifice.* Or rather (leſt the Speech ſhould be miſunderſtood) We Commemorate, or we doe (that which is a Solemn Sacrifical Remembrance

membrance of it, or in the Words of the Text, we doe that which is a Solemn grateful ſhewing forth the Death of our Lord.

I ſhall have occaſion hereafter to inſiſt on theſe things, when I come to ſpeak to the ſecond General obſerved in this Text. In the mean time all I urge this for at preſent is to make good this Notion, that this is the great Chriſtian Rite of Sacrificing, and ſo a Solemn Act of Publick Worſhip, as Sacrificing (we know) was amongſt the Jews, and all Nations too.

From whence alone we may Collect another very good Argument for the Conſtancy of this Service: Not only becauſe this was always one conſtant Rite of Worſhip amongſt the Jews, and all other Nations, but likewiſe becauſe it is Inſtituted to be a means of Chriſtian Worſhip and Adoration, which certainly ought to be as conſtant as among any other ſort of Men whatever.

But I ſhall Conſider this Act of Worſhip a little more diſtinctly, and the references of it, to ſtrengthen greatly this Argument. For we may Conſider this Service or Worſhip, as it reſpects God, or as it reſpects our Saviour himſelf.

1. If we Conſider this Service with reſpect to God, we ſhall find the Scripture intimating theſe two great purpoſes of it; 1. As a Symbol of Praiſe and Thankſgiving to him,

him, for the Mighty Mercy and Love in ſending his Son to die for us. 2. As a Sacrament of Prayer, in Vertue and Merit of which we offer up our Prayers to him, to be made Actual Partakers of the benefits of that Death, and hope to have them heard and accepted. Both which purpoſes will joyntly combine in telling of us how, frequent (or conſtant rather) we ought to be in this Service.

1. As a Solemn Rite of Thankſgiving and Praiſe to Almighty God, for his Aſtoniſhing and even Infinite Love, in ſending his own Son into the World, to die for us, and to make the great Expiation and Atonement for the Sins of Mankind.

There can be nothing more becoming and needful for Chriſtians, than to have a mighty high ſenſe of this goodneſs, and to think no Praiſe can be too great for it. The Truth is when a Man ſits down and endeavours to affect his Soul with all the particular Circumſtances of it, he will ſoon find his thoughts paſs into extaſie and rapture, be ſo confounded with a ſenſe of Divine goodneſs in this wonderful diſpenſation, that he will ſoon ſee all mortal Comprehenſions are too narrow for it, and all poſſible Praiſe infinitely ſhort of the greatneſs of it. We may well cry out when we Conſider it, with the Seraphical and rapturous St. *John*, 1 *John* 3. 1. *Behold what manner of Love the Father hath beſtowed*

ſtowed upon us! We can admire, and we can wonder at the thoughts of it, but we have not Words to expreſs the greatneſs of it.

And if we obſerve it well, we cannot but take notice how very fit a Symbol of our Praiſe this is, and how proper this time is for the offering the ſame, both in reſpect of God and our ſelves too.

Of God, to let him ſee that we keep by us the remains and pledges of our Lords dear Reſpects and Love to us: Lay up the Memorals of his Stupendious kindneſs and make it one part of our Solemn Service and Worſhip, to keep up a freſh ſenſe and remembrance of it, that no tract of time may wear it off our Minds, but that even now, at the end of ſixteen hundred years and more our remembrance of it is as freſh and affecting, as that of the Diſciples was when going to *Emmaus*.

Nothing doubtleſs can be more acceptable and well pleaſing unto God, who as he triumphs in the reflections upon his own goodneſs; So cannot but be well pleaſed to ſee it ecchoed and rebounded in the grateful acclamations and praiſes of Men.

It is certain the Divine goodneſs triumphed in this to a pitch incomparably above any thing, either in his Creation of the World, or his Providences towards it. And ſo he ſpeaks in his own Revelations. And therefore it can-

not

not but be grateful to him, to ſee us Poor Men retain a ſenſe as ſutable to it, as our narrow Comprehenſions will give us leave to doe. Our Incenſe cannot be more fragrant, nor the Odours of our Praiſes more pleaſing, than when they are inflamed by a Coal from that Altar, upon which his own Son's Blood is Sacrificed in the Symbols of it.

And with reſpect to us, never could a fitter time be choſen for this Sacrifice: Never a ſeaſon thought on more likely to raiſe our ſenſe of Gods Love in the Death of his Son, to a higher Pitch, or more inflame our Praiſe and Gratitude for it, then when we ſee him even viſibly ſet forth and Crucified before our Eyes: His Body broken, and his Blood poured out, in the Sacramental Actions about the Holy Symbols.

We find it true in experience, that abſtracted thoughts and Meditations doe not ſo lively impreſs us, as things that are Palpable and ſtrike our ſenſes; with which Infirmity the Wiſdom of God hath greatly complied in this Inſtitution, in which we doe not hear only with our Ears, what great things Chriſt hath done for us, but have lively and viſible repreſentations of his Death, the more ſtrongly to affect us with his Love in it.

And certainly if we be not wholly ſtupid, and inſenſible to a degree equal to that of Stocks and Stones, theſe things muſt greatly affect us, cauſe a mighty ſenſe of Divine Love

in

in our Hearts, and fill our Mouths with Songs of Praiſe and Thankſgiving for the ſame.

This then being the Chriſtian great Euchariſt, and this a Rite of Solemn giving Thanks to God, for the Death of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and of the great benefits which we receive thereby (as the Church of *England* ſpeaks) it will be improveable into an undenyable Argument, for the Obligation to a frequent Celebrating of it: Since I am ſure no Man can deny, but that this calls for continual Thanks, and makes the Tribute of a daily Sacrifice greatly due to God. And therefore lays an indiſpenſable Obligation upon all Chriſtians, to joyn with others in paying that Tribute, and ſending up that Holy Incenſe to Heaven, ſo often as the Church thinks fit to call us thereunto.

2. If we conſider this act of Worſhip with reſpect to God, we may look upon it as a great Rite or Sacrament of Prayer, with which we unite our Prayers, and in the Merit of it may hope to have them accepted.

It is moſt certain, and all Learned Men agree in it, that Sacrificing was but a more Solemn way and manner of Prayer, and a thing practiſed in hopes to render Prayer more ſucceſsful. For all Men being conſcious of their own Crimes, and ſenſible of their own Unworthineſs to appear before God, what little reaſon they have to expect to be accepted

accepted, or to have ther Petitions granted by him, for their own ſakes, have concluded it mighty fit and proper, to have ſomething Subſtituted in their ſtead, which when they Prayed for Pardon of Sin might make ſome Compenſation for them, and bear the Curſe and Puniſhment of Death due to them. When they begged for any other Bleſſings, might be offered as ſome ſmall *Præmium*, and Purchaſe for them: And when they offered Praiſe for Mercies received, or dangers eſcaped, *&c.* might be preſented unto God as a viſible Teſtimony of that inward gratitude that they then made profeſſion of.

To all theſe purpoſes, Sacrifices excellently ſerved them, and were accounted a means by which they hoped to have their Confeſſions of Sin, and deprecations of Puniſhment: Their Petitions for Bleſſings, and their Praiſe and Thankſgiving accepted by the Almighty.

And I doe not doubt but God himſelf deſigned them to this purpoſe amongſt others, to teach Men to look from themſelves, to ſomething elſe to render them acceptable unto God, and by the viſible and apparent meaneſs of Sacrifices in themſelves, to look beyond them to ſomething elſe that was intended by them: Which was doubtleſs the great Sacrifice of his own Son; with which God is ſo well pleaſed, and for the ſake of which he promiſeth to accept the Services and Perſons of Men.

And therefore it is certain that these two always went together; I mean, Sacrificing and Praying. Of which we have so many clear Testimonies in the Old Testament, that I think it needless to search into them, and for which reasons the Hours for the Morning and Evening Sacrifice, are called the Hours of Prayer in the New Testament, particularly *Acts* 3. 1. And we are so assured of the Truth of this, that we not only have the concurrent Testimony of all the Learned Men among the Jews, and others too, that have writ of these things, but we have the very Forms of Prayer themselves that were made use of at these times; which were different according to the difference of the Sacrifices that were offered, to the design and purpose of which they were suited. —— And this was so constantly the Practise in the then World, that *Pliny* lays it down as a Law, that *Victima cædi sine Precatione non debetur*, *No Sacrifice ought to be offered without Prayer*; nor ought we to consult God without it.

And to advance a little nearer to the purpose of this Argument, it is certain the Sacrifice of the Cross, *i. e.* of the Body and Blood of Christ, was the great thing shadowed and pointed at by all the Legal Sacrifices of old; 'twas in relation to this they were all Instituted, and in the Vertue of this that they were accepted: They being poor and mean things in themselves, and very unfit Compensations for

for Sin, it being impoſible (ſaith the Author to the *Heb.* Chap. 10. 4.) that the Blood of Bulls and Goats, *&c.* ſhould by any Vertue of their own purge Sin.

This therefore hath now ſucceeded in the room of all thoſe Sacrifices, and is now become the great Sacrifice of the Chriſtian Church, in the Vertue of which She offers up all her Prayers to God, and in the Merits of which, She hopes to have them, her-ſelf, and all her other Services accepted by God. Chriſtians go to God in the name of Chriſt, plead the Merits of his Blood, and expect a Gracious Anſwer to their Prayers only for his ſake.

Now the Holy Sacrament being the Commemoration of this Sacrament, as *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks, the ſhewing forth this Death of Chriſt, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, it is a very fit and proper rite of Prayer too, a moſt excellent expedient to ſucceed with God, and to work in us alſo that Holy Confidence, and Faith in Prayer, which is always ſo pleaſing and acceptable to God. For which cauſe the Chriſtian Church hath always Celebrated this Service with devout and earneſt Prayers as we learn from *Act.* 2. 46. where Breaking of Bread and Prayers are joyned together. —— And from thoſe too that give us an account of the Chriſtian Service and Worſhip. And it is ſo certain that they did thus Pray at that time, and had reſpect to this in all their Prayers at other times:

That we know the Altar, or the Place where they Conſecrated the Elements, and on which the Symbols of this great Sacrifice were placed, was the place too, where they offered up all their Publick Prayers; to ſignify that they offered up their Prayers in Vertue of this, and that they hoped the remembrance of this Sacrifice, being Inſtituted by God himſelf, would render their Prayers prevalent and acceptable to him.

And as I ſaid but now, no time would be more proper, no means more ſucceſsful, either to prevail with God, or to cauſe us to hope for that audience, than this is.

With reſpect to God, we may be aſſured, that as nothing pleaſeth him better than the Obedience and Sacrifice of his own Son: So nothing can be more probable to prevail with him for Bleſſing, than the pleading humbly and heartily the Merit of the ſame. It is in the Merit, and continual remembrance of this, that Chriſt now interceeds for us in Heaven. And it is in the Merits of this, that the Prayers of good Men on Earth are now ſo acceptable to God. He that is ſo well pleaſed with his Son, and for our Comfort declared, himſelf to be ſo, with a Voice from Heaven, cannot be diſpleaſed with thoſe Perſons, that Adore and Worſhip this Son, and Honour him as their Lord and Saviour; nor with thoſe Prayers, that they preſume not to offer to him but by his Mediation, and all whoſe hopes

hopes and expectations of audience are founded only on his Merits.

And certainly with reſpect to us, nothing can ſo Animate and Inſpirit our Addreſſes to God with hope and humble confidence of acceptance, as to conſider that our Incenſe flames from this Golden Altar, and that God cannot deny thoſe that come in his Sons name. That however our Prayers be poor deſpicable things in themſelves, and we worſe that make them, yet the Blood of Chriſt is able to put a value upon both; And though we have nothing of our own to preſent to him: Nothing in us to uſe as Arguments for his Mercy (but only our Meanneſs and Miſery) yet we have that Precious Sacrifice of his Son to preſent him with, that is of price indeed, and we have thoſe Arguments drawn from thence, to plead for our ſelves, that are reſiſtleſs, and can never be denyed by him.

We may (at ſuch times eſpecially) thus advantage our Prayers to him: Behold Lord here is the token of thy Love to us; here is thine own Son Bleeding and Dying for our Sins; here is thine own Chriſt, and our dear Jeſus, in whom thy Soul is well pleaſed, Dying upon the Croſs, a Shameful, Painful, Bitter; and Accurſed Death: Forſaken of God and Scorned by Men; here is our Bleſſed Redeemer paying our Ranſom, and Drinking up the Cup of thy Wrath and Vengance for our Sins. We preſent thee with the ſaid, and yet grate-

ful Memorials of thy Sons Paſſion. Here Lord is enough to move thy Compaſſion; here is that which thou wilt not, thou canſt not refuſe. Upon the Merit of this, we are humbly confident, and cannot doubt of acceptance, though we have nothing of our own to bring to thee.

This is juſt anſwerable to the Jewiſh Form of Prayer, at the offering the Treſpaſs Offering. I have Sinned, o Lord, but I beſeech thee Pardon my Sins, and accept this Offering from me, and be Gracious to me for the ſake of it. Only here we have a much more valuable Sacrifice to preſent to God, and that with which we are ſure he is much better pleaſed.

Now this likewiſe will yield us an undenyable Argument for the frequency of this Service. For, that our Prayers to God ought to be conſtant, our own continual wants of Grace and Bleſſing will inform us, if the Scriptures did not. And ſince the Holy Sacrament is ſo excellent a means to render our Prayers ſucceſsful, both to Inſpirit us with Devotion and Hope, and ſo prevalent with God to move him to accept them: Certainly we ſhould not look upon this as a Service, that it is ſufficient to perform two or three times in a year, but rather make it a conſtant part in our publick Worſhip, at leaſt, take care to obſerve it as often as we may. Nothing can more highly concern us, than to uſe all poſſible means whereby our Prayers may ſucceed, and return with

with answers of Blessing; and then certainly it cannot but concern us to use this Service as frequently as we can, which we know is so effectual to that purpose.

CHAP. VII.

This Service is considered as a Solemn Act of Adoration, and Worship of Christ. In what respects it is so, and the Arguments improved from each of them.

2. BUt Secondly, we may consider this Act of Worship with a respect to Christ also; and upon that account it will be Obligation to frequency in it, as well as upon the former.

It is most plain and certain upon Christian Principles, that Divine Worship is due to the Blessed Jesus: And it is warranted by our Saviours own Words 1 *Joh.* 5. 23. *That all Men should Honour the Son as they Honour the Father*; *i.e.* the same Divine Honour and Worship that is due to God is to be given also to the Son, as the very Socinians themselves interpret this place.

Upon which Principle we may warrantably call the Holy Sacrament a Solemn Act of Divine Worship, and yet make it to have re-

ſpect unto Chriſt; *Doe this in remembrance of me, and as often as ye Eat this Bread, and Drink this Cup, ye doe ſhew the Lord's Death till he come.* For which reaſon it is called the Supper of the Lord, *i. e.* of Chriſt, not only becauſe it was inſtituted by him, but ſeems peculiarly to reſpect and relate to him, and to be inſtituted on purpoſe to be a Solemn Rite of Adoring and Worſhiping of him. And it is indeed that peculiar Symbol, by which the Chriſtian Church doth expreſs and teſtifie that mighty Honour which it hath for the Saviour of the World.

And that the Chriſtian Church did always look upon this Service, as an Act of Worſhip, and Adoration render'd to the Son of God, appears not only from her making this, one ſtated part of her Publick Service on the Lord's day, but from thoſe Forms of Prayer and Praiſe that were uſed with it, which were immediately directed to God the Son, as well as ſome were to the Father, and the whole Bleſſed Trinity, every Perſon of which hath a Gracious Intereſt in the Contrivance of Mans Redemption.

Now this alone, before we paſs further, will afford us a very good Argument for the frequency of this Service. For that we ought to pay all poſſible Honour and Worſhip to our Bleſſed Redeemer, his many great performances for us, and his mighty Love to us in them all will loudly tell us. This is a thing acnkow-

acknowledged by all Christians, who should then (methinks) acknowledge too, that they ought never to omit any opportunity, nor any means of expressing the same, especially not any that he himself hath Instituted to this purpose. Which seeing that the Holy Sacrament both is, and was intended to be, I doe not see how Men can pretend an Obligation to Worship him, and a Care to doe it, yea in a measure above their Brethren, and yet, have no regard to this, in which they may so Solemnly, and so acceptably doe the same.

It is a shrewd sign that they doe not doe this so constantly as they pretend, that neglect such Solemn and Publick opportunities of doing it, and then their pretence is Hypocrisie; or that they make themselves Wiser than God, in chooſing to doe this in their own way, but refusing to doe it in Gods; and then they will be guilty of a Monstrous Pride and impardonable Presumption.

But this Argument will be strengthened more, by a more distinct consideration of this thing; to which therefore I shall now proceed. And I shall only on this head farther tell you, that this considered as an Act of Worship relating to our Saviour, may be considered to a three fold purpose, every one of which will be Arguments to our present design, and all of them combine to make one almost unanswerable.

1. As

1. As a greatful Remembrance of the great Love of Christ to Mankind.

2. As a peculiar Acknowledgment of his Incarnation.

3. As a proper Commemoration of his Crucifixion.

1. As a grateful Remembrance of his great Love to Mankind, in undertaking the great Business of our Redemption.

It is most certain, if ever there were any thing done for Mankind which might challenge his utmost Praise and Thankfulness, his highest Adoration and Acknowledgment, this of the Love of Christ might doe it much more: A Subject on which Meditation will soon be lost, and run it self into Admiration and Extasie; there are no Comprehensions big enough for it, in this our Imperfect and Mortal Sate, and the most rapturous thoughts are too mean for it. Angels admire and wonder at it, and Blessed Souls feel continual transports of Joy upon the Solemnizing of it; it is the blessful entertainment of Saints in Heaven to Sing Hallelujahs of Joy and Praise, to Exalt and Magnifie the Love of Christ to them; and Angels joyn in consort with them, saying, *Worthy is the Lamb that was Slain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing*, Rev. 5. 12 This is a Subject that can never be exhausted, nor can Finite Comprehensions ever reach

the

the utmoſt of it, the Bleſſed above, ſhall ſtill ſpring freſh Diſcoveries of Joy and Wonder in it, which will be their happy Entertainment and Pleaſure for evermore.

What therefore the Saints and Angles in Heaven Adore and Worſhip, we ought certainly to Adore on Earth; and to make that one part of our Religious Employment and Worſhip now, which we hope will be our happy Entertainment for ever hereafter. And we ought not in this caſe to content our ſelves only with an Outward ſenſe of this Love, and with ſuch a Worſhip as is tranſacted only between God and us, with ſome Private or Internal Acknowledgments: But we ought to teſtifie our great ſenſe of this, by ſome External Signs and Expreſſions, as we doe all other Acts of our Devotion: Inflame our Souls with ſuch a quick and vigorous ſenſe of the Love of our Lord, as may not only warm our inward Affections, but flame out and break fourth into outward Expreſſions: Impregnate our Souls with Love, and Joy, and Wonder, till our Thoughts and Paſſions grow too big and vehement to be ſuppreſſed in our own Breaſts, but break forth into Publick Songs and ſenſible demonſtrations of Praiſe and Thankſgivings.

To this purpoſe Religious Feſtivals will excellently ſerve us, having been practiſed in all Ages, and in all Nations to this end, to be Publick and Solemn Teſtimonies of Praiſe and

and Joy, for great and eminent Bleſſings, and to perpetuate the Memory of ſuch things, as might probably wear off in Tract of time, were it not advantaged and refreſhed with ſuch viſible and impreſſive Commemorations.

This is a Cuſtom which hath not only been warranted by the Religion, and Prudence of all Nations, but by Gods own immediate Inſtitution, for ſo the ſeventh day was originally Inſtituted as a Feſtival, in Memory and Honour of the Creation, which was finiſhed in ſix days, and from which God Almighty reſted on the ſeventh. After which the firſt day of the Week ſucceeded, as the Chriſtian Weekly Feſtival, in Honour and Memory of our Redemption, which was perfected by our Saviours Reſurrection that day from the Dead. —— And thus the Paſſover was Inſtituted too, to be a Memorial of the Deliverance of the Jews out of *Egypt*, when God ſlew all the Firſt-born of that Land, but mercifully ſpared, and paſſed over them and their Houſes. And ſome ſuch reaſons you will find aſſigned for the other Publick Feaſts of Weeks and Tabernacles, which were immediately Inſtituted by God, together with this of the Paſſover; and thoſe other which in Tract of time the Jews added to theſe: Such as the Feaſt of Purim, and the Feaſt of the Dedication were to perpetuate the Memory of great Bleſſings, ſuch as they accounted

ed their Deliverance from the Conſpiracy of *Haman*, and the Purifing the Temple and Altar, after their Profanation by *Antiochus*.

And to bring the matter cloſe to our preſent purpoſe, ſuch was the Inſtitution and Purpoſe of this great Feaſt in the Chriſtian Church, to Commemorate the mighty Bleſſing of Mans Redemption, and the aſtoniſhing Love of the Bleſſed Jeſus in it. And ſo the Words of the Inſtitution declare, *Doe this in remembrance of me*, Luke 22. 19. to keep up the Senſe and Memory of my great Love towards you, that you may not only think on me when I am gone, but remember me with thoſe tranſports of Gratitude and Praiſe, that are juſtly due for my kindneſs to you.

As the Men of the World uſe to Inſtitute Feaſts in Memory of their great Friends and Benefactors: So doe you obſerve this Feaſt in Honour of me, and to perpetuate the Memory of what I have done for you. This will greatly affect you, and more deeply impreſs you with the ſenſe of my Love, when you ſee the viſible Pledges and Symbols of it. And the frequency of this will ſtill keep the Memory of it freſh, and warm upon your thoughts.

Now this will afford a very good Argument for the frequency of this Service, ſince nothing can more concern, or greatly advantage us to all the great purpoſes of Religion and goodneſs, than to impregnate our

Souls

Souls with a great ſenſe of our dear Lord's Love to us, which ſo often as we loſe, or let flag and decay in us, we are unjuſt to our Saviour, and unkind to our ſelves too. Unjuſt to him, becauſe we fail in that which is ſo mighty due for all his great kindneſs towards us: And unkind to our ſelves too, ſince we looſe that which is the greateſt Incentive, Incouragement and help to our Chriſtian Duty, of any that our Religion furniſheth us withal.

2. This Act of Worſhip with reſpect to Chriſt may be conſidered as a peculiar Act of knowledgment of his Incarnation.

There was never any thing that befel the World, or came within the reach of Man's thoughts, that was more Myſterious and Wonderful, than the Incarnation of the Son of God. This is a Subject on which our thoughts will ſoon loſe themſelves, and our Admiration on and Wonder ſoon be glutted; That the Word ſhould be made Fleſh and dwell among us: The Eternal Son of God, the increated Wiſdom of the Father come down from Heaven: Cloath himſelf with Fleſh and Blood, and become a Man as we are, ſubject to the ſame Infirmities and Paſſions as we are, only without Sin.

And all this that he might dwell among us (ſaith St. *John*) and converſe with Men without that aſtoniſhment and terror, that his unvailed Glory would ſtrike Men with, it be-

ing too ſplended and dazling for Mortal Eyes to look upon. And that when he had converſed with the Miſeries and Infirmities of humane Nature, and lived a poor, abject, afflicted life, he might die as a Sacrifice for our Sins, and by his own death make attonement for tranſgreſſions.

Be aſtoniſhed, O ye Heavens at this. What Heart can comprehend, what Tongue can expreſs the wonders of this Condeſcenſion and Love? The very Angels themſelves (*St. Peter* tells us) doe with Wonder and Joy pry into the mighty aſtoniſhments of this Myſtery. And ſure we then ought much more affect our Souls with the biggeſt ſenſe of this Condeſcention, and with the mighty Love of our Saviour in it: Conſider what Honour is put upon our Nature by it, and how highly it is axalted, being taken into an Immediate Union with the Divinity.

If ever Honour and Worſhip were due to the Lamb of God, it muſt certainly be ſo upon this account: If ever we ought to Sing Glory and Praiſe to God in the higheſt, it was when this Humiliation appeared in the Earth. The Angles themſelves have led us in this Anthem, and ſure we ought to follow, and Sing it after them.

You may Read how the Apoſtle deſcants upon it, *Phil.* 2. beg. And how juſt he thinks all Honour due to him for the ſame; *He that was in the form of God, and thought it no Robbery*

to

to be equal with God, yet humbled himself, and was found in fashion as a Man, took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of Men; therefore God hath highly exalted him too: Magnifie that Name, that hath so highly Magnified us, and Honour him that hath so highly dignified us: Resume the Virgin *Mary*'s *Magnificat*, and Sing it after her, with the same Raptures of Joy, for the Honour he hath done our Nature, that she did, when she reflected on that Honour, that was conferred on her, when she was promised to become the Mother of God.

The Pious and Devout Fathers of the Church, when they come to touch this Subject in their Meditations, seem to be charmed with the Wonders of it, and unable to get their thoughts off it. And certainly nothing can be more pleasing to a good Soul, than to loose it self in the contemplation of such kindness as this: To find an object too big for its highest Raptures and Extasies of Devotion, to pass beyond the Sphere of words or thoughts, and to be swallowed up in silence and amazement.

Now to this purpose will this Service of the Sacrament excellently serve us, and to this purpose among others was it Instituted, to be a Symbol of Devotion, by which we Adore a God Incarnate, and pay Homage and Worship to him that became Man for us. The Bread that we Eat in this Holy Feast can scarce but mind

us of that Bread that came down from Heaven: And when we feed on the Symbols of his Body and Blood, they will naturally bring us to remember his taking humane Nature upon him, and ſtrongly heighten our Devotion and Praiſe to him, by prompting to our thoughts thoſe Wonders of Love and Goodneſs and Wiſdom that appear ſo viſibly in the Incarnation.

And doe we need now to be told, what a mighty Argument this is for the frequency of this Service? Certainly Honour, and Glory, and Worſhip, and all the moſt profound Adoration poſſible, are Eternally due to the Son of God for this. And therefore that which is the Symbol and *Medium* of all this, ſhould be thought as greatly, and conſtantly obliging us, as any other inſtance of Chriſtian Worſhip. And we are as unjuſt to our Saviour, and as regardleſs of our own advantage in neglecting any opportunities for this, as we can be in neglecting the opportunities and ſeaſons of any other.

3. This Act of Worſhip, as it relates to Chriſt, may be conſidered as a proper Commemoration of his Crucifixion. If any thing can be more amazing and ſtrange than the Incarnation, or a more ſurprizing inſtance of Chriſts great Love to Mankind, it muſt needs be his Death and Paſſion.

This was certainly the height and utmoſt Complement of every thing that can be de-

monſtration of Love, and that which rendered it like himſelf truly Infinite. There can be no greater demonſtration of Love, than to die for a Mans Friend; and yet this Love of God is recommended to us with this preference, that when we were Sinners and Enemies Chriſt died for us.

This renders it a Love to which every thing elſe that hath been ever ſhewn in the World, is but a ſhadow, and to which no Fiction or Romance could ever yet reach. The Apoſtle when he is ſtudiouſly running up the Love of Chriſt to the higheſt pitch, ſtopes here, that he became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Croſs, in the forementioned place, *Phil.* 2. 8. And it is moſt certain he could not run it higher, or ſay any thing of it beyond this.

Bleſſed Jeſus! Was it enough for thee to debaſe thy ſelf ſo low, to ſtoop to all the Infirmities and Weakneſſes of Humane Nature? Had it not been low enough to undergo Poverty and Meanneſs, Reproach and Wants for our ſakes? Was not ſuch an Act of Condeſcenſion enough to appeaſe Divine Juſtice for the Sins of a Thouſand Worlds? Might not the Revilings and Affronts, the Scorns and Bufferings, the Thorns, and Whips with which thou waſt torn, be enough to reconcile us unto God? And could we not Read thy Infinite Love clearly enough, in thoſe Bloody Characters that it was written by theſe upon thy

thy Back and Temples. But after all these must thou actually tread the Wine Press and suffer Death, and that a Cruel, Bloody, Tormenting, Cursed Death too, as that of the Cross was! Lord, What can we say, or what can we think of this Love? We want Words, yea, we want thoughts big enough to comprehend this Wonder. Silence and Amazement, Raptures and Tears of Joy are the best things we have to entertain it with.

Come now and tell me, what Honour, what Worship, what Adoration doe we owe for this Love? Nay what is it that we should not owe, were we able to pay it? The highest Flames of Cherubims were too mean an Incense, and yet alas we cannot reach them neither. There is but one only way left us to repair this Infirmity, to supply in length of time what we want in measure, and to be doing that always, which we can never doe fully: To let those Praises be infinite in Duration, which are so finite in themselves, and let them be extended to Eternity, which cannot be intended to due Proportions by our narrow Capacities.

While we are here, this Service will excellently serve us to this purpose, and when we go hence, we doe not know what Capacities we shall have, nor what higher Notes we shall learn from that Seraphical Quire above, that will become our Instructors and Consorts too in these Anthems. It doth not yet appear

what we ſhall be, nor what returns we ſhall be able to make.

But it doth greatly concern us to conſider, what now we ſhould be, and to practiſe all thoſe things that may be helpful to us, in raiſing our Thoughts, and winging our Devotion, and heightning our Praiſe for ſuch a kindneſs. To all which purpoſes the Holy Sacrament will greatly help us, in which we feed on the Sacrifice of the Croſs; have our Lord viſibly Crucified before our Eyes; ſee a lively repreſentation of the Breaking of his Body, and the pouring out of his Blood, and have our Souls and Senſes mightily affected with the Tragical Solemnities of his bitter Paſſion.

And in which too we are called upon to offer Sacrifices of Praiſe and Thankſgiving for the ſame. Which can never be ſuppoſed to be more real and hearty, than when our thoughts are raiſed up by ſuch a clear Symbolical repreſentation of it.

And ſurely we need not be told now, what an Argument this is for the frequency of this Service, unleſs we can think the Love of Chriſt in dying for us, to be ſo mean, that it will be enough now and then only to remember the ſame. I am ſure in this we are greatly injurious, and baſely ungrateful to our dear Lord. And we are mighty Enemies to our ſelves too, in loſing thoſe mighty advantages to the purpoſes of Religion, and our Souls good,

that

that the proſpect of the Croſs would certainly yield us.

Thus I have finiſhed the firſt part of this third great Argument for the frequency of this Service, and the Obligation to it, taken from the Nature of this Inſtitution and Service. It is a Solemn Symbol and Act of Worſhip to God and Chriſt too, in the vertue of which we offer up our Praiſes and Prayers, and pay our Homage to our Dear Lord for the Wonders of his Incarnation and Paſſion. Which if you have conſidered well, you will find an unanſwerable Argument for the Obligation upon all Chriſtians often to Eat this Bread, and Drink this Cup. And I doe not ſee why it will not hold thus far, even that this Service ſhould be as frequent as our Publick Service and Worſhip of God and Chriſt is; of which (ſeeing) it is ſo Solemn a part, that muſt needs be lame and imperfect without it.

CHAP. VIII.

The Second Part of this Third Argument; where the ends of this Service are conſidered; Five of theſe propoſed to be inſiſted on. The Firſt this in the Text; to what end this remembring Chriſts Death is Inſtituted; and what an Argument each of theſe ends affords to the preſent purpoſe.

2. I Proceed now to the ſecond part of this Argument, which is taken from the ends and purpoſes of this Inſtitution. I ſhall mention ſome of the chief and moſt conſiderable of them: Every one of which will become Argument for the frequency of this Service, and in the Words of the Text, for the often Eating this Bread, and Drinking this Cup. I ſhall chooſe to inſiſt upon theſe Five.

1. It is Inſtituted to be a Rite of Commemorating or ſhewing forth Chriſts Death.

2. To be a Federal Rite between God and us.

3. To be a Means of our Actual partaking the Effect and Benefit of all his Performances for us.

4. To

4. To be a Means of our Union unto Chriſt.

5. To be a Means of our being United among our ſelves.

I doe not intend to explain all theſe ends largely and fully, but only ſo far as may be foundation for our preſent Argument, and affords us ground to ſuperſtruct the neceſſity of frequency in this Service upon.

1. I begin with the Firſt, which is the end and Reaſon of this Service mentioned in this Text, and in our Lord's own Inſtitution, *viz.* the Commemorating or Shewing forth our Lord's Death, *As often as ye Eat this Bread and Drink this Cup, ye ſhew the Lord's Death till he come.* And the ſame is mentioned in the Inſtitution, *Doe this in remembrance of me.* I have ſaid ſomething of this already, and therefore ſhall need to ſay the leſs now: Eſpecially becauſe this I have propoſed as the third general thing to be diſcuſſed from this Text. And therefore I ſhall not anticipate here, what will be more fittly ſpoken on that head.

I only mention it here as an Argument for the often Eating this Bread and Drinking this Cup. And the Truth is, the Inference is ſo clear, that no conſidering Perſon can well miſs it.

Whatever Commemorating or ſhewing forth the Death of Chriſt can ſignifie, whether it reſpect God, our ſelves or others: Whe-

ther it intend Praiſe or Joy, or Hope in believing, in every ſenſe it will yield us a good Argument, and becomes Obligation to this purpoſe.

1. For Firſt, if it reſpect God, then it intends the putting him in mind of the precious Death of his Son, and of the full Expiation made by it: The Pleading before him the Merits of his Son's bitter Paſſion, that we may prevail with him for Mercy, and the Pardon of our Sins, which thereby he hath ſo fully atoned and ſatisfied for.

And I dare truſt any one that can conſider, now to ſay, whether this be not a mighty Argument to frequency in this Service. God knows our failings are daily, and our wants of Mercy and Pardon conſtant: And ſo will they be with the beſt while they continue in this State of Mortality and Imperfection, and can it then be any thing leſs than neceſſary, that we frequently implore Mercy from God, by that Argument that we know is moſt prevalent with him? All our hopes of Pardon muſt be founded only on the Merits of our Saviours Death, or elſe they are Preſumption, and we have nothing elſe to move God to Compaſſion towards us. We can never therefore be too frequently pleading this with God, and begging him to remember what hath been done for us there.

And ſince this is inſtituted by our Lord himſelf

himſelf to be the Solemn way of doing this, we muſt think it the moſt effectual, and therefore our Intereſt will combine with our Duty in calling for this from us.

2. But it may perhaps reſpect our ſelves, and then it denotes that mighty care we ought to take to impreſs our Souls with the Serious and Solemn Memory, of what Chriſt in his Death hath done for us, and of the mighty Benefits that we receive thereby.

To this purpoſe it is moſt certain, the Holy Sacrament was Inſtituted to be a Solemn Repreſentation of the Death of Chriſt, and by the viſible Breaking of Bread, and Pouring out of the Wine, even ſenſibly to repreſent Chriſt Crucified before us, and to impreſs us the more with a deep ſenſe of his Sufferings for us, by theſe plain Expreſſions and Symbols thereof.

Now this will become another Argument for what we are contending for. It is moſt certain a Chriſtian ſhould endeavour to live in a contiunal ſenſe of his Crucified Saviour, and there can be nothing more univerſally conducive to all the great purpoſes of Religion than to doe ſo: And therefore it will greatly concern him to refreſh his Memory, and to Impregnate his Thoughts afreſh with theſe Ideas, and Notions as often as he can.

Alas we find by too ſad experience how deſultory and unconſtant our own Minds, and how

how fluid and uncertain our Memories are, how ſoon the Entertainments of Senſe, and Pleaſures of the Body, and the hurries of Worldly Buſineſs wear off all the Impreſſions of Religion and the Notions of God. And therefore ought to take all opportunities of refreſhing and repairing theſe, that God affords us; and eſpecially this which is ſo very proper and very affecting, and is Inſtituted by a Wiſe God to this purpoſe.

3. And Thirdly, this ſhewing forth the Lord's Death may have reference to others alſo, and then it denotes the declaring and publiſhing our Faith and Joy in the Death of Chriſt: That he is the Saviour of Mankind, the Lamb of God that was Slain to take away the Sins of the World. And this is the exact Import of the Greek Word καταγγέλλειν, which is uſed by our Apoſtle here in this Text, and ſignifies to ſhew forth, to publiſh and declare abroad, as Men uſe to doe good Tidings, and Joyful News, and ſpeak of things that are mighty pleaſing and acceptable to them. To this purpoſe this Sacrament is inſtituted too, and it ſerves directly this end. It is a Solemn Rite by which the Church declares to the World, its Faith in a Crucified Saviour, that it is not aſhamed of the Croſs of its Dear Lord, but can Triumph and Glory in it though the World account it its reproach, and object it to its Shame.

In the Sacrament of Baptiſm it ſigns every Baptized Perſon with this ſign of the Croſs, and it tells you the reaſon of it, that he may not be aſhamed to confeſs the Belief of a Crucified Jeſus. And in this Holy Sacrament it repeats that acknowledgment and Faith, with Joy, and Courage, and great Comfort, and calls upon Men and Angels to take notice, that it Celebrates this Feaſt in Memory of its Lord's Death, and upon its own Members too, to tell it out among Men, and to warm one anothers affections, with the gladſome Tidings of what great things Chriſt hath done for them.

And certainly this alſo will become Argument for the frequency of this great Service, in which we doe ſo much right to our Lord, and ſo much benefit to our Brethren too; Proclaim the Kindneſs of the Dying Jeſus, and approve our ſelves to be Men, that have a mighty ſenſe of it, and encourage our Brethren, and inſpire them with reſolutions of Duty and Service to ſo Loving a Saviour, by ſetting before them the amazing Inſtances of his Kindneſs in Dying for them.

But then we muſt remember that it is not a bare Repreſentation, or Remembrance that is intended by this Expreſſion and Action, but it is a Remembrance that is to be attended with Joy and Praiſe, and great Cheerfulneſs in our reſolutions of Duty and Service to God, as I hinted before; and every one of

theſe will be Argumentative for our often Eating and Drinking, as we are contending.

1. It is a Remembrance of our Lord's Death and Paſſion with a great and triumphant Joy, at the unſpeakable Love manifeſted in it, and mighty Bleſſings intended by it to poor Man. Thus it is ſaid of the Apoſtles, *Acts* 2. 46. *They did Eat their Bread* (which we are to underſtand as all Learned Men doe, of this Sacramental Eating) ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει καρδίας, *with gladneſs and leaping of their Heart*: θαυμάζοντες καὶ ἐκπλήττομενοι τὴ ἀφάτῳ δωρεᾷ, ſaith St. *Chryſoſtom*, wondring and being aſtoniſhed at this unſpeakable gift, and the amazing Love of God in it. And conſonantly to this it hath been always accounted a Chriſtian Feaſting before the Lord, and to have been in the Chriſtian Church much what the ſame that the Paſſover was in the Jewiſh, a Feaſt Inſtituted to this great purpoſe among others, *viz.* of rejoicing before the Lord for his great Mercy in delivering them and their Fathers out of *Egypt*. And indeed all Feaſts are Inſtituted to this purpoſe, to be Symbols and Expreſſions of Joy and Gladneſs, and therefore the Command to the Jews was, *Deut.* 16. 14. thou ſhalt rejoice in thy Feaſts.

And yet there is one Notion common amongſt Learned Men, from whence the reaſonableneſs

ſonableneſs of this will be yet more clear if any thing can make it ſo; and that is, that this is Feaſting upon the great Sacrifice of Chriſts Body and Blood, and ſo is juſt anſwerable to the Jews Feaſting upon their Peace Offerings under the Law, which was always attended with great Expreſſions of Joy and Gladneſs, upon hopes that God had accepted their Sacrifice, and was now at Peace with them. And certainly, if any thing in the World can be thought worthy the Joy of Chriſtians, this may, to conſider that their great Peace-Offering is accepted, and they are admitted to feed on it, in token of Gods acceptance and reconciliation with them.

And can there then be a clearer Argument for the frequency of this Service? Or any thing greater Obligation to it? A due Senſe of this Love cannot but fill our Hearts brim full of Joy and Gladneſs, and cauſe that Joy to run over, and gladly to break out into open expreſſions, and ſenſible demonſtrations, whenever we have opportunity of doing it; and therefore moſt gladly to embrace all ſeaſons of doing this in, eſpecially ſuch as himſelf hath Inſtituted to this purpoſe. We ſhould rejoice in the Lord always, (and it is ſo reaſonable to doe ſo) that the Apoſtle adds, again I ſay, rejoice, that we may know it is really a Chriſtian Duty to doe it, and therefore moſt certainly to doe this, when he himſelf more eſpecially calls us to it, and

hath

hath Inſtituted Services and Symbols to doe ſo in. To which purpoſe ſince this Feaſt is appointed, and ſo aptly ſerves, certainly we ſhould not need be told, how frequent it ought to be in the Chriſtian Church, and how careful and forward we ſhould be, to obſerve all the Seaſons of it whenever they come.

2. It is a Remembrance of the Lord's Death with Thankfulneſs and Praiſe to God for the Love and Bleſſings of it. It is moſt certain that all Feſtivals among all Nations have ever been reputed of Sacred and Religious Inſtitution, in Honour of God, not only to Commemorate ſome great Bleſſing, but to offer and return Solemn and Publick Praiſe for the ſame. And indeed in the reaſon of the thing, one of theſe follows from the other, *viz.* that whenever Men have cauſe given them for Publick Joy, they ſhould remember that great Providence that orders all theſe things, and not forget to return Praiſe and Thankſgiving to that God, who filleth their Hearts with Joy and their Mouths with Laughter.

According to which, Feſtivals among the Jews, and the Heathen Nations too, were always Celebrated with Sacrifices and Religious Rites of Praiſe, and among Chriſtians with Publick Praiſes and Thankſgivings, (theſe more Spiritual Sacrifices) to this day.

And thus we ſhall find our Saviour Inſtituted this Solemn Feaſt upon his own Body and Blood. For ſo St. *Matthew*, reporting the Inſtitution,

ſtitution, tell us, *Mat.* 26. 26. *While they were Eating, he took Bread,* καὶ εὐλογήσας, *Bleſſing and Praiſing*; and v. 27. *Taking the Cup,* καὶ εὐχαριστήσας, *giving Thanks.* And ſo St. *Paul* relates the matter too, 1 *Cor.* 11. 24. *For I delivered that which I alſo received of the Lord, how the Lord Jeſus in the ſame Night that he was betrayed, took Bread,* καὶ εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασε, *When he had given Thanks he brake it*; which doth not refer to the Bread, as if it intended the Bleſſing that only, and Conſecrating it, for the Words of Conſecration follow, and it was not as a Grace before Meat, for St. *Matthew* tells us, it was after they ſate down and had Eaten. —— But all Learned Men refer it to thoſe Praiſes that he offered up then to God, for his Kindneſs to the World in ſending him, *&c.* juſt as the Jews alſo always Celebrated the Paſſover with Publick Doxologies and Praiſes to God, for his Mercy in the *Egyptian* Deliverance. And to make this further plain, St. *Matthew* tells us, *Mat.* 26. 30. that they Sung a Hymn before they departed, and perhaps it was part of that Pſalm 118. which was ſo well known to the Diſciples, it being that Pſalm which the Jews always Sung at the Paſſover; part of which Providence ordered to be Sung by the Multitude, when this great Paſchal Lamb came into *Jeruſalem* to be Sacrificed.

I doe not think it needful to add on this, what juſt matter and cauſe this is for the moſt

moſt rapturous Praiſe and Thankfulneſs to God. The thing ſpeaks it ſelf, and exalts Gods Kindneſs to the higheſt pitch poſſible, and when conſidered by Men, cannot but cauſe raptures, and alſo aſtoniſhment in them.

I only urge it as an Argument to my preſent purpoſe; and certainly it is a ſtrong one: If this be appointed to be a Symbol of Praiſe if this be the Chriſtians great Euchariſt (as Antiquity hath always called it) their great Sacrifice of Praiſe to God for the Mercy, and Benefits of his Son's Death. One would think no more need be ſaid, to ſhew Men how they are obliged unto it, and that as often too as they may perform it, ſince it is a giving Thanks for that Mercy, which makes the Praiſe and utmoſt Service of our Lives, yea of Eternity, due to God for it.

3. But Thirdly, there is one other end yet intended by this Remembrance, and that is, to make us all cheerful in our Reſolutions of Service and Duty to our Good God. For as this Service is a Solemn Covenanting with God, and obliging our ſelves to his Service (as I ſhall have occaſion to ſhew hereafter) ſo the Joyful and Thankful Commemorating of this mighty Kindneſs, and aſtoniſhing Love, what ſure hopes it gives us of Divine acceptance, and favour, how kind and full an Atonement it is for our Sins, how certainly and ſurely it Seals to us Gods Covenant of Grace, wherein

wherein he promiſeth to accept and reward our imperfect Service and Labour of Love, and to aſſiſt us alſo with his Grace to perform the ſame: I ſay, all theſe conſiderations may juſtly fill us with Joy in believing, and invigorate and inſpire our Souls with a great and mighty cheerfulneſs, in our Reſolutions and Purpoſes of Obedience to God.

And good Men can tell you how they find this Effect of this Service: Feel how it warms their Hearts, and invigorates their Reſolutions, and with what a ſweet and inexpreſſible cheerfulneſs, they riſe from this Holy repaſt and refreſhment.

And few Things can be more juſtly Arguments to frequency in it than this is. For, alas! Many are the diſcouragements that the World wars againſt good Men with: Our little Fires and Flames of Love are too apt to expire and die of themſelves, but much more ſo, when they are ſurrounded with ſo many Fogs and Vapours, and accidents to extinguiſh them. Our Tempers are deſultory and uncertain, and our Pious purpoſes very apt to disband of themſelves, and much more ſo by reaſon of the Temptations and Entertainments of ſenſe, and ſtrength of Paſſions, and Hurries of Worldly Buſineſs, *&c.* and our Joys are often damped, and he that now thinks he can run the way of Gods Commandments, in a little while begins to lag and tire, and move as heavily as the

Egyptian Charets did in the deep ſands of the Red Sea.

And therefore it can be no leſs than highly and abſolutely needful to refreſh our Spirits, and relieve our languiſhments, and add new Fewel to our Flames, and freſh Vigour to our Purpoſes, that we may walk and not be weary, and run and not faint, till we come to ſit down at our Fathers Houſe, in our Lord's Glory: To which excellent and needful purpoſes ſince the Holy Sacrament is Inſtituted, and may happily Miniſter, it will be Argument with all that are wiſe, all that value theſe things, often to Eat this Bread, and Drink this Cup.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

A Second end of this Service insisted on; Wherein the Ancient Eastern *way of striking Covenants is a little explained. The same shewed to be accommodated by our Saviour, to his purpose in the Sacrament; and the Argument improved from this also.*

2. ANother end of this Institution is to be a Federal Rite between God and us; an External signification and Symbol of a Covenant struck between God and us; a Solemn Action, wherein both Parties give Testimony of their being in League together, and doe something which is declarative of their assent to their own respective parts of it. God entertaining us at his own Table, and letting us feed upon the Symbols of his Sons Body and Blood, declares openly his being reconciled with us, and stipulates and Seals to his part of the Covenant, and we by feeding at his Table, and Worshipping in the Memory and Merit of that Blood declare our Thankful acceptance of this Blessing, and Stipulate and Solemnly oblige our selves to the return of that Duty and Service, that he requires as

the condition of our receiving actually the Effect of it.

This Inſtitution ſeems clearly to reſpect the way of ſtriking Covenants between Men in thoſe *Eaſtern* Countries, and to which God evidently had reſpect in the Moſaical Diſpenſation.

The *Eaſtern* way of ſtriking Covenants you have a ſpecimen of in *Jacob*'s Covenanting with *Laban*, the Story of which you have Recorded, *Gen.* 31. v. 46. you have theſe Words: *And* Jacob *ſaid unto his Brethren, gather Stones; and they took Stones, and made an heap, and they did Eat there upon the heap*; *i. e.* they did Eat upon the Fleſh of thoſe Beaſts, whoſe Blood *Jacob* had ſhed, and offered up in Sacrifice, in Teſtimony of the League, and Covenant, that was there made between them. For ſo the following Context tells us, v. 54 *Then* Jacob *offered Sacrifice upon the Mount, and called his Brethren to Eat Bread, and they did Eat Bread, and tarried all night on the Mount.*

The like to which you may read obſerved by *Iſaac*, in his Covenanting with *Abimelech*, Chap. 26. 30. ſaving that the Offering Sacrifice is not mentioned, but the feeding together is, for it is ſaid *Iſaac* made them a Feaſt, and they did Eat and Drink, *i. e.* they did Eat together in token of the Peace that was then Covenanted between them.

This

This is a Subject that Learned Men have Adorned, and made clear by their Learned Labours, and by it explained many paſſages of Scripture in *V. T.* in ſeveral places of which Eating together is ſpoken of as a Federal Rite, and a Symbol of Peace and Friendſhip between the Covenanting parties. And *David* expreſſeth a Man's being at Peace, or in a Covenant of Friendſhip with him by Eating at his Table, *Pſ.* 41. 9.

And the ſame you ſhall find obſerved alſo in Covenanting with God. Thus the Apoſtle tells us *Heb.* 9. the firſt Teſtament was dedicated by Blood, *i. e.* the Firſt Covenant was ſtruck and confirmed by Blood. For ſo you may read, *Exod.* 24. to the ninth, when *Moſes* ſtruck the Covenant between God and the People, he offered Burnt Offerings and Peace Offerings, and poured on part of the Blood upon the Altar of God, and the one part he ſprinkled on the People, and called it the Blood of the Covenant.

In which you have an Account of Covenanting with God exactly anſwerable to what I have been obſerving before; for the Altar was called Gods Table, and he ſaid to feed on that part which was offered upon it, as part of the Peace Offering allways was, the other part the People were permitted to Eat of, and in doing ſo were ſaid to Feaſt before the Lord, or, in the Apoſtles Phraſe, 1 *Cor.* 10. 18. to partake of the Altar, to Eate with

God of the ſame Sacrifice, by which, and the Sprinkling both the Altar, and the People, with the Blood of theſe Sacrifices, *Moſes* confirms the Covenant between God and them.

And *Pſ.* 50. 5. you ſhall find this ſpoken of as a conſtant Rite of Covenanting with God: *Gather my Saints together, thoſe that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice*, which you are to underſtand of the Peace Offerings wherein the Sacrificers Communicated with God, and Eat at his Table, as was ſaid before.

Now to this Ancient way of Covenanting together doth this great Sacrament of the Holy Supper anſwer exactly, in which we feed at the Lord's Table (as the Apoſtle expreſly calls it, 1 *Cor.* 10. 21.) upon the Symbols of that great Sacrifice, *viz.* of the Body and Blood of our Lord, that great Ilaſterion and Peace Offering, by which we are Reconciled unto, and Confederated with our God. And therefore you ſhall find the Blood of our Savi- our called the Blood of the Covenant, *Heb.* 10. 29. And the Cup, which is the Symbol of it, is called by our Saviour himſelf, the New Teſtament in his Blood, *Luke* 22. 10. which St. *Matthew* expreſſeth ſomething more clearly, Chap. 26. 28. This is my Blood of the New Teſtament; *i. e.* the New Covenant is confirmed by my Blood, and this Cup is the Symbol and Sacrament of it; and by your Eating and Drinking theſe Symbols, you ſtrik

ſtrike Covenant with God, you and God actually confederate together.

This is ſufficient to let you underſtand this matter clearly enough; and I doe not know whether there be any great need of adding more. However that our Underſtanding of it may be diſtinct and clear I ſhall add ſome few things conſonant to the ſenſe of the Goſpel, by which we may fully apprehend it. I ſhall but only name them.

1. We ought to know that this Gracious Covenant of Acceptance and Mercy to Penitent Sinners, was founded upon the Merit of what our Saviour undertook and performed for us. He it was that undertook the great Work of Mediation between God and Mankind, that he might compoſe the difference that was between them and bring them into terms of Amity and Peace.

2. This Covenant was ratifyed and confirmed by the Blood of our Saviour. Upon which acconnt (as I ſaid before) it is called by the Apoſtle the Blood of the Covenant; *i. e.* it was ſo tranſcendently a Meritorious Act, that God was reconciled and appeaſed by it, and immediately entered into a Covenant of Grace and Mercy to Mankind for the ſake of it.

3. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the Solemn Symbol of this Death and Paſſion, wherein this Blood was ſhed, and this

Gracious Covenant confirmed thereby. This Our Saviour himself expressly tells us, *This is* my Blood of the New Testament; *i. e.* a Solemn Representation of that Blood of mine, by which the New Covenant with Sinners is confirmed.

4. And therefore Fourthly, Our partaking of this Sacrament, is a feeding on the Memorials and Symbols of this Death and Passion, in which we Solemnly declare our Joyful acceptance of this Covenant, and our Joyning with God in it, and Solemnly oblige our selves to the Conditions and terms of it. In a Word it is feeding upon the Memorials of that Sacrifice, by which our Covenant was made with God, and in which we Solemnly oblige our selves to the Conditions of it.

I think there is no more needful for us to consider on this, but only to be put in mind what the Terms and Conditions of this Covenant are; and those you may find often expressed in these general and comprehensive Phrases; *I will be their God and they* shall be my People; which are very extensive Phrases indeed, and comprehend all the Blessings that a God can confer upon us, and all the Instances of Subjection and Duty that we owe to God.

But if we view the places wherein this Covenant and the sum of it is more particularly expressed, you will find these two especial Blessings Stipulated unto on Gods part. 1. The

The Pardoning of Sin, and 2. the the Writing of his Law in our Hearts, *i. e.* in plain Terms, the forgiving of Sin upon Repentance and Faith in Christ, and the giving Grace to enable us to doe our Duty, as he commands us; *i. e.* the assisting us to be, and behave our selves as his People, which is the thing Stipulated unto on our Parts.

This I think is enough to give us the understanding of this matter, how the Holy Sacrament is a Federal Rite between God and us: A Service in which we confirm that Covenant, which others entred into for us at our Baptism, and renew our Covenant our selves too, after our careless breaches and violations of it.

So that I may now proceed to improve this into an Argument, for what I am all along in this Discourse contending for.

Were I to speak to those that never yet received this Sacrament, and to those that live in a constant Neglect and Disregard of it, as I am afraid too many doe. I might from hence take good occasion to shew the absolute necessity of Receiving this Sacrament where there is any possibility of having it, and the most dangerous and deplorable Condition of those that neglect the same.

It is absolutely necessary to Salvation that we be in Covenant with God, and it is as necessary that we enter into this Covenant by those means that he hath appointed us. — Baptism

Gracious Covenant confirmed thereby. This Our Saviour himself expresly tells us, *This is* my Blood of the New Testament ; *i. e.* a Solemn Representation of that Blood of mine, by which the New Covenant with Sinners is confirmed.

4. And therefore Fourthly, Our partaking of this Sacrament, is a feeding on the Memorials and Symbols of this Death and Passion, in which we Solemnly declare our Joyful acceptance of this Covenant, and our Joyning with God in it, and Solemnly oblige our selves to the Conditions and terms of it. In a Word it is feeding upon the Memorials of that Sacrifice, by which our Covenant was made with God, and in which we Solemnly oblige our selves to the Conditions of it.

I think there is no more needful for us to consider on this, but only to be put in mind what the Terms and Conditions of this Covenant are ; and those you may find often expressed in these general and comprehensive Phrases ; *I will be their God and they* shall be my People ; which are very extensive Phrases indeed, and comprehend all the Blessings that a God can confer upon us, and all the Instances of Subjection and Duty that we owe to God.

But if we view the places wherein this Covenant and the sum of it is more particularly expressed, you will find these two especial Blessings Stipulated unto on Gods part. 1. The

The Pardoning of Sin, and 2. the the Writing of his Law in our Hearts, *i. e.* in plain Terms, the forgiving of Sin upon Repentance and Faith in Chriſt, and the giving Grace to enable us to doe our Duty, as he commands us; *i. e.* the aſſiſting us to be, and behave our ſelves as his People, which is the thing Stipulated unto on our Parts.

This I think is enough to give us the underſtanding of this matter, how the Holy Sacrament is a Federal Rite between God and us: A Service in which we confirm that Covenant, which others entred into for us at our Baptiſm, and renew our Covenant our ſelves too, after our careleſs breaches and violations of it.

So that I may now proceed to improve this into an Argument, for what I am all along in this Diſcourſe contending for.

Were I to ſpeak to thoſe that never yet received this Sacrament, and to thoſe that live in a conſtant Neglect and Diſregard of it, as I am afraid too many doe. I might from hence take good occaſion to ſhew the abſolute neceſſity of Receiving this Sacrament where there is any poſſibility of having it, and the moſt dangerous and deplorable Condition of thoſe that neglect the ſame.

It is abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation that we be in Covenant with God, and it is as neceſſary that we enter into this Covenant by thoſe means that he hath appointed us. — Baptiſm

Baptiſm it is true is the firſt means appointed to this purpoſe, and I hope I need not doubt whether we are all Baptized or no: But, alas! This was done for us by others, and though the Effect of it ſhould have been received by us, had we died before we were able to Covenant with God our ſelves, yet I doe not ſee any reaſon to expect it, now that we refuſe to doe this when we may.

Baptiſm no doubt is ſufficient for an Infant ſtate, but there are other Proviſions made for us when we come to an adult State of Reaſon, and then there are other Meaſures for us to obſerve; we are then to ſet up for our ſelves, and then to ſtand or fall by our own deeds, and if we doe not actually confirm that Vow, and undertake the Conditions of that Covenant that was made and entred into by others, I doe not ſee any reaſon we have to expect the Benefits of it, or to reckon our Baptiſm available to any purpoſes of Salvation.

Nay, I doe not ſee how we can account our ſelves ſo much as Chriſtians, that have never actually undertaken the Covenant and Conditions of Chriſtianity. We may renounce our Baptiſm for any thing yet appears, and we in effect doe ſo if we doe not confirm and ratifie it in this Service.

Beſides, we have every one of us broken that Baptiſmal Vow and Promiſe that was then made for us, and ſo put our ſelves from

from under God's Covenant, and forfeited all Title and Intereſt to any of thoſe mighty Bleſſings that we might expect or claim from it. We none of us need be told this; the conſideration of our Lives and Actions will tell it us faſt enough, how we have broken this Covenant, and failed in thoſe conditions of it, that were then Stipulated unto for us. — And therefore cannot now expect, that God ſhould own us to be in Covenant with him, nor make good his part of it unto us, who have ſo ſhamefully failed in thoſe conditions that were incumbent on us.

Which makes it highly neceſſary for all ſuch Perſons, to renew this Covenant, and actually enter into it themſelves, which they can only doe by this Service, unleſs they would live without God and without Hope, and be caſt off as thoſe that have neither part nor portion in the Covenant of Grace, nor any Right or Title to any of the great Bleſſings of it.

Theſe are things mighty neceſſary for all thoſe to conſider, that have never yet received this Holy Sacrament, too many of whom I am afraid, are in this audience; for God's ſake conſider, what your condition is, how you are Aliens to the Hope of *Iſrael*, Strangers to the Covenant of Promiſe; you have not yet entered into Covenant with God, nor can lay claim to any of thoſe Mercies that are promiſed in it.

But

But the direct end and purpose of this Discourse is not to these Persons, but to those that do receive this Holy Sacrament, but alas, but very seldom, once or twice in a year perhaps, and that while the Apostle adviseth often to Eat this Bread and Drink this Cup, think it too much to doe this once in a Moneth. My Brethren I cannot but be greatly concerned to see this so unchristian Indifferency, and neglect of this so Solemn, so Useful, and so greatly advantageous a Service. This is indeed a Fault among you, and that which this Discourse is designed to the Cure of. It is not an Indifferent thing, which you may receive or neglect when you please; but God hath Instituted it to be a standing Necessary Service in Christianity, and if we had either that due regard to his Institution, or that respect to our own advantage, which we ought to have, we would not turn our Backs upon it so often as we doe.

What God's Command is, I have shewed you before; what our own Advantage and Gain by it may be, I am shewing now, from the nature and ends of this Institution. And this end that I have been explaining and making good at present, will combine with others to shew us our gain by it, and become good Argument therefore for our often Eating this Bread, and Drinking this Cup.

This Holy Sacrament is Instituted and designed to be a Federal Rite between God and us:

ns: A Symbol by which we renew our Covenant with God and put him in mind of it, and plead the gracious purpoſes and conditions of it. And for God's ſake tell me, can any thing more greatly concern us, than often to doe this: I beg you to conſider with me theſe Four things, which I ſhall little more than name at this time.

1. What a mighty Honour and Glory this is, that the Almighty God ſhould receive us into Covenant with himſelf, and inſtitute a way in which we may even viſibly confederate with him: I doe not well ſee how God can put greater Honour upon the Sons of poor Man in any thing.

And what now, can we turn away from ſuch an Honour as this is, and lightly regard the Love of the moſt high? In other Inſtances we are not ſo ſhy nor backward, nor often fail in any thing that may add to our Reputation and Glory: And why we ſhould doe it in this ſo often, is becauſe we doe not ſo much covet or regard the Honour that cometh from God, as we doe a Vain and Fictitious, a Falſe and Fugitive Reputation among Men.

2. I Beſeech you; Conſider the mighty Priviledge of this, that we have free Liberty ſo often to repeat our Promiſes, and renew our Covenant with our God. We cannot but ſadly obſerve how falſe and treacherous we

we are to our Vows: How often we falsifie and break our Covenant with God; and therefore cannot well but observe also, what a miserable condition we were certainly in, should God take every Forfeiture, and null his Covenant upon every of our Shameful Violations of it.

And consequently, what a Mercy it is in God to admit us to a renewing our Covenant with him, to be ready to accept us to new Terms of Peace, and what a mighty Priviledge it is to have free access to him for this purpose as often as we please.

This is not the manner of Men, but a Patience and Kindness that truly bespeaks a God: And we shall mightily undervalue his Kindness, if we doe not so esteem it, and gladly accept and improve all the Seasons of it.

3. I Pray consider what a mighty advantage this is to us, and that in these two respects.

1. To oblige us the more carefully to doe our Duty, and to fasten our Purposes and Resolutions of it, by renewing frequently our Vows and Promises unto God, and considering under what mighty Obligations we are to serve him.

God knows we have all of us great need of all the Arts and Arguments we can use, to engage our selves in this thing; for our Hearts

Hearts are uncertain and traiterous and apt to give back, and our tempers are desultory and fleeting, and mighty apt to alter and start aside; and therefore the more need to fix and settle them as well as we possibly can; and since our Minds are so dull and resty, to add a spur, and what Life and Vigor to them we can, by repeating our Promises, and renewing afresh our Vows and Covenants, and affrighting our Souls with that Dreadful Guilt of Perjury and Treachery, if we doe not continue stedfast in our Resolutions and good purposes.

2. To render us the more brisk and cheerful in our Course of Duty, for so often as we observe this Sacrament, we cannot but have a great sense of the Love of God, and Christ, in vouchsafing to admit us into a Covenant of Grace and Mercy, and obliging himself by visible Seals and Pledges, to make good his Conditions of it to us. And our Souls cannot but be mightily enlivened with a sense of the one, and our Faith confirmed and refreshed by the other: Both which things will fill us with Joy in Believing and Cheerfulness in Obeying, render us Joyful in Hope, and Stedfast in Faith, and carry us with Cheerfulness and Delight through all the difficulties in Duty, and enable us to bear down all the discouragements and temptations we can meet with in our Christian Course.

We

We cannot but too ſadly obſerve how ſubject to doubts and fears, our Hopes are; how often our Spiritual Joys are interrupted and damped, and how liſtleſs we are to the Service of our God, and therefore have great need to aſſure our Hopes, and relieve our Fears, and Impregnate our Spirits with new Life and Vigour, as much as we can, to keep up a continual ſenſe of the Love and Faithfulneſs of our God, and to live as much as we may in a continual remembrance of it; which will fan our Spirits, and fill our Sails, and carry us with ſafety and comfort to our great Port. To which God of his Infinite Mercy bring us all for Chriſts ſake. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Divided into four Sections. In the First the third end of this Service is mentioned and explained, and the Truth of it confirmed by some peculiar and concerning considerations. In the Second another Argument from Analogy is considered, and some places of Scripture produced. In the Third that place of St. John, *Chap. 6. Ver. 53. is vindicated from an Objection against the sense of it. In the Fourth the Argument from this consideration is largely Improved.*

3. ANother end of this Service and Institution is, to make us actual partakers of the Effect and Benefit of all our Saviours great performances for us; I mean, the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is instituted to be a means of our actually partaking the Benefit of that Redemption that Christ hath wrought for us.

This is a very considerable Notion, and therefore I shall first endeavour to explain the Sense, and confirm the Truth of it; and then secondly improve it to the purpose that hath been all along aimed at in this Discourse.

1. As for the Explication of what I mean, a little may ſuffice, becauſe I put it in Words that are intelligible and plain; for we may eaſily underſtand what it is actually to partake in the Effect and Benefit of what Chriſt hath done for us; and what I mean by this being Inſtituted to be a means of our doing this.

But yet for our diſtinct apprehenſion of this matter, I ſhall propoſe the ſenſe of what I ſay in theſe plain following notices.

1. It is not enough preſently to the actual Salvation of all Men that Chriſt hath wrought ſuch a Redemption for them: All Men are not actually ſaved becauſe they have a Saviour; all Mens Sins are not actually Pardoned, becauſe Chriſt hath made the great Expiation and Atonement for them; nor all Men preſently in the actual Love and Favour of God, becauſe Chriſt hath reconciled his Father to Mankind. For the Scripture plainly tells us, that notwithſtanding all this, multitudes of Men ſhall finally periſh.

2. That therefore, over and beſide what Chriſt hath done, there muſt be ſome way of applying to us, or inſtating us in the Effect thereof. For as a thirſty, ſtarving Man is not bettered only by the being of ſuch liquors and refreſhments in the World, but by actually taſting of them: So Men are finally ſaved, not becauſe there is a Saviour, but becauſe they

they are intereſted in what that Saviour hath done for Men.

And at the ſame time that we believe that Chriſt Jeſus is the Saviour of Mankind, and hath done ſuch and ſuch great things to that purpoſe, it is highly reaſonable to believe, that there is ſome way and means by which we may be intereſted in, and partake the effect of what he hath ſo done.

3. This can only be rationally expected in ſuch a way, and upon the performance of ſuch conditions, as God himſelf hath been pleaſed to appoint.

It is highly reaſonable that God himſelf, who provided this great Sacrifice for our Redemption, ſhould appoint what conditions he pleaſed, to be obſerved by Men in order to their partaking the Effect of it. This is that which is allowed to all Maſters of Prizes, and great Benefactors in the World: And no Man, ſaith St. *Paul*, is Crowned, unleſs he ſtrive Lawfully; *i. e.* no Man expects to enjoy the reward propoſed, unleſs he labour and contend for it in that way that he is appointed to doe.

4. Among theſe conditions you ſhall find the Goſpel mentioning this for one, and ſuch an one, as without which the others may be looked upon as inſufficient.

That this may appear clear to you, I ſhall conſider what the eſpecial conditions of Salvation in the Goſpel are, and thoſe you ſhall

find to be these three: Faith in Christ, a suitable Life and Conversation, and an observation of the Christian Sacraments. To these three, whatever is required as a Condition of Salvation in the Gospel, may be reduced.— Now to let you see the Truth I am contending for, you need but observe only these two things:

1. That these things are only effectual to Salvation, while they are conjoyned together, and none of them is sufficient of it self alone. I speak here of Salvation upon Christian Principles, for what God may doe with Heathens, we are not now considering. I say then, according to the Gospel, none of these are of themselves alone available to Salvation; which you will presently perceive by considering them singly.

1. To believe in Christ, *i. e.* as it primely signifieth believing him to be the Son of God, the Saviour of the World, believing his Gospel, assenting to his Doctrine as true and Divine; nay, further than this, expecting Salvation only upon his account and Merit. This is not enough to save a Man. For after all this there is required a suitable Life and Conversation; a Life becoming the Gospel of Christ, without which, the forenamed Faith shall only aggravate a Mans Guilt, and expose him to the severer Condemnation.

2. In

2. In like manner in the ſecond place, to lead a vertuous good Life, *i. e.* the beſt that is conſiſtent with Humane Imperfection, is not enough to ſave a Man neither, without Faith in Chriſt, and the Application of his Merits, which alone renders any thing that Man can doe, of any account with, or acceptable unto God. For, the beſt Man living is an unprofitable Servant, and all that he doth is not only what he ought, but much leſs than what he ought to doe. And all the expectation of any acceptance or reward from God, that he can expect, is vain, unleſs it be founded upon the Merits of Chriſt, and that Covenant that God hath entred into with Man for his ſake.

3. And thirdly, The receiving the Sacraments, the being admitted into the Communion of Chriſt's Church, and the Profeſſion of his Religion, the ratifying and owning the Obligation of Chriſtianity our ſelves, the Communicating with the Church in its moſt Sacred Myſteries, the Eating the Fleſh and Drinking the Blood of Chriſt, in the Holy Supper, is not available to Salvation when it is disjoyned from the two former: For *Judas* and the worſt Men have done all this, and yet fell ſhort of Salvation.

From all which it will appear clearly, that to ſeparate theſe one from another, is to take away the Effect of all; It is to divide thoſe things which God hath joyned together,

and fooliſhly to expect the bleſſing from one, which God hath promiſed only to all. —— Nay, which is yet more, it is to deſtroy the very Nature of each of them. For,

2. One of theſe doth virtually include in it the other; they are not only united and linked together in the Precepts of Chriſtianity, but one of them ſuppoſeth, and comprehends in it the other, according to the true Doctrines thereof. —— As for example, to inſtance again in them,

True Chriſtian Faith is that which worketh by Love, and engageth to the keeping the Commandments of Chriſt; true Faith in Chriſt is believing and accepting him in all the capacities that God offers him; the attending to him as a Prophet to inſtruct and teach us, the ſubmitting to him as a King to Rule and Govern us, as well as a Prieſt to expiate our Guilts, and to give us a Bleſſing. The right Chriſtian expecting and looking for Salvation from him, is expecting it upon thoſe conditions that he hath promiſed it; *i. e.* the ſincere endeavour to doe what he Commands us in the Goſpel.

And ſo true Chriſtian Obedience always ſuppoſeth Faith as its Root and Cauſe, and equally reſpects and makes Conſcience of all Chriſt's Commandments: And conſequently muſt reſpect thoſe things, which above all others, are Chriſtian Inſtitutions; for ſuch the Sacraments of the New Teſtament are, as hinte

hinted before in this Diſcourſe. Theſe are the Peculiar Precepts of Chriſtianity, and the only things which Chriſt may be ſaid to have Inſtituted, over and above what was before.

And truly, for my own part, I doe not ſee why Chriſtian Obedience may not baulk other Precepts of Chriſt as well as this. Nay, indeed, why it may not much rather doe ſo to others, than to this; ſince moſt of the other Commands ſeem to be the Dictates of Natural Religion, or Religion conſidered at large; but this the peculiar Inſtitution of that Religion which is called Chriſtian.

And ſo likewiſe (to finiſh this reflection) the true Chriſtian Obſervation of the Sacraments of our Lord, is it ſelf an Act of Chriſtian Obedience, and ſuppoſeth Faith in Chriſt, and a true Conſcience of his Commands: Or elſe our Baptiſm is no more than a common waſhing, and our feeding upon the Symbols of his Body and Blood, but as an ordinary repaſt or meal.

By this ſhort view of theſe things you may perceive, how all theſe are linked together in the Methods to Salvation, how each of them doe include and ſuppoſe the other, and conſequently what little reaſon Men have to make Separations and Diſtinctions between them, or to ſay one is not neceſſary to Salvation as well as the other. For my part, I doe not well ſee, how Men can give greater inſtance

of their Presumption, and stepping into the room of God, than to distinguish and make differences between things, where he hath made none: To presume to say what is necessary to Salvation, and what is not, of things that are equally required to that end by him: To dare to determine which Command is necessary to be obeyed, and which is not, when God hath equally enjoyned both. If God have Commanded this Service, I think it as necessary to be done, as any other that he hath required; and if he have commanded it to the purpose of Salvation, I dare not but think it necessary to that purpose, and doe not yet understand, why Men may not as well say, that Faith in Christ, or a Holy Life, are not necessary to this end, upon the same reason that they say the Sacraments are not, for they can be no more expresly commanded than these are.

SECT. 2.

But I shall yet proceed further to shew you the Efficacy of this Holy Sacrament, in order to giving us an actual Intereſt in what Christ hath done for us, and instating us into the vertue and effect of all his performances. —— And this I shall doe, 1. By an Argument founded on Analogy. 2. By considering what the New Testament expresly saith as to this case.

1. The

1. The Analogy I mean, is between this Service, and the Jews feeding upon the Sacrifices under the Law. For this (as I have hinted before) Learned Men make to be the true Notion of the Lord's Supper, that it is feeding upon the great Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, which was offered for the Redemption of Mankind. And therefore it must be with Christians in this Service, as it was with the Jews in that Service of theirs.

Now it is most certain, the feeding upon the Sacrifice, was that which gave the Jews an Interest in the vertue of it, and in all the Blessings purchased by it: And no Man did think himself concerned in it, but he that did thus actually partake and eat of it. This was plainly the Truth of the case in all their Peace Offerings.

And particularly in the Passover, to which this Christian Service seems, and is generally understood, more especially to relate, it was absolutely necessary, that every Person should Eat of the Paschal Lamb; and he that did not so, was so far from being benefited by it, that he was threatned to be cut off from *Israel*, as one that disregarded God's Institution, and undervalued the means too, of his Grace and Blessing.

Now we may argue by a good and warrantable Analogy from hence, that in like manner, it is necessary to feed upon this great Sacrifice,

Sacrifice, to Eat the Fleſh, and Drink the Blood of Chriſt in the Sacrament, in order to our actual partaking in the vertue and benefit of it.

2. And to this purpoſe you ſhall find many paſſages in the New Teſtament ſpeaking very intelligibly and plainly. I ſhall chooſe two or three to inſtance in; as 1. That memorable Speech of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16. *The Cup of Bleſſing, which we Bleſs, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Chriſt? The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Chriſt?* The meaning is very plain, and without looking after Interpreters, our own Tranſlators in the Margent point us to the true ſenſe: This is a participation of Chriſt; *i. e.* by this we actually partake in the Effect and Benefit of Chriſts Paſſion.

Another place I ſhall mention is that Speech of our Saviour, *Joh.* 6. 54, 55, 56. *Whoſo Eateth my Fleſh and Drinketh my Blood, hath Eternal Life, and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day; for my Fleſh is Meat indeed, and my Blood is Drink indeed.* —— *He that Eateth my Fleſh and Drinketh my Blood, dwelleth in me and I in him.* In which place, the having Eternal Life, and dwelling in Chriſt, are plain expreſſions, to denote the actual partaking in the Benefits of Chriſts Death and Sufferings, which were to atone Sin, and give Men a Right and Title to Eternal happineſs. And theſe are ſaid to be certainly conſequential to Eating his

his Flesh and Drinking his Blood, which can signifie nothing so naturally as this Service of the Sacrament.

The last place I shall commend to your consideration is the saying of Christ in v. 53. immediately before these last words named; *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye Eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and Drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you.* No Right nor Title to that Life which he comes to effect for you. Which is plain to our present purpose, and needs no Comment.

SECT. 3.

THere is only one thing that needs to be cleared for the full conviction of this matter from this place; and that is, that this place speaks of this Sacramental action of Eating and Drinking the Symbols of our Lord's Body and Blood. In order to the clearing of which, it were enough to consider, 1. How naturally the Expressions seem to look to this, and how strained and forced they appear, when interpreted to another sense. 2. To consider what a multitude of Learned Men, especially the Ancients, have understood them thus. 3. How those very Men that labour to interpret them to another purpose, do yet confess that they are fairly applicable to this, among whom *Calvin* himself is one.

But

But 4. The moſt convictive way is to conſider and anſwer the Objection that is made againſt this Interpretaion. A Learned Man hath lately done it to my hand, and therefore I need ſay the leſs on it. Only it will be neceſſary to conſider it, and ſhew what little of weight there is in it, to ſway a conſidering perſon againſt the Interpretation of it, that we are contending for.

The Objection is briefly this, That the Eating in the Sacrament could not be meant in that Speech of our Saviour, becauſe that Feaſt was not then Inſtituted, and that neither his own Apoſtles, nor the Jews could poſſibly underſtand him, if that were the meaning of what he ſaid. This is the Sum of the Objection, which truly I think no way formidable, but capable of a very eaſie ſolution.

1. For Firſt, As to the Pretence of the Sacrament being not yet Inſtituted, and therefore that theſe words cannot relate to it, it ſignifieth juſt nothing: Since it is moſt plain that our Saviour ſpoke of many things, in his Diſcourſes, before they actually came to paſs, and gave directions about many things, which could take no place till after his Death and Reſurrection. And we might (for any thing I ſee) as well ſay, that Faith in Chriſt which he ſo often declares to be ſo neceſſary to Salvation, and ſpeaks himſelf ſo much of, hath

hath no reſpect at all to his Death, and Suffering, and riſing again, becauſe when Chriſt ſpake thoſe things, his Paſſion and Reſurrection were not come to paſs, no, nor underſtood, nor thought on by good Men.

Secondly, as to what is objected that the Jews, or Apoſtles themſelves, could not underſtand then the meaning of theſe Words, if this were Chriſts ſenſe of them, it may as eaſily be anſwered, that no more they did underſtand a great many of other things, which he ſpake of in his Diſcourſes and Sermons to them.

Such for Inſtance was the notice of his Paſſion, which St. *Luke* tells us plainly they underſtood not, but it was hid from them, *Luke* 9. 45. Yea when he told them of it very plainly and (to our Apprehenſion now) ſo intelligibly, that they could not but underſtand his meaning, yet the ſame St. *Luke* tells us, Chap. 18. 34. they underſtood none of thoſe things, and this ſaying was hid from them, neither underſtood they the things that were ſpoken.

The Truth is, if we read the Goſpel, we ſhall find, they underſtood very little of our Saviours Divinity, or the reaſons of his coming into the World, and that Spiritual Kingdom that he came to erect in it. The Jewiſh conceit of a Temporal Meſſiah, of an external Deliverance and Glory, that he was to effect for them, and veſt them in, ſo ran in their

their heads, that they underſtood nothing almoſt of that Spiritual Redemption from Sin, that he ſo often ſpake of his effecting for Mankind, and of the Methods by which he deſigned to conduct Men to Salvation. Yea this notion ſtuck ſo faſt in their minds, that his Death, which was the great Act of Redemption, yet quite deſtroyed all their hopes of being redeemed by him: *We hoped that this was he that ſhould have redeemed* Iſrael, *Luke* 24. 21. Nay after his Reſurrection, and Inſtructing of them in things pertaining to his Religion and Kingdom; yet even then you ſhall find them in the ſame expectation ſtill; *Lord, wilt thou at this time reſtore the Kingdom to* Iſrael? *Acts* 1. 6.

It is true, when the Holy Ghoſt was given them, and enlightened their underſtandings, then things came to their Remembrance, and then they underſtood things plainly, and then felt the happy Effect of his former Inſtructions and Diſcourſes to them. And no doubt but the meaning of this great ſaying was plain to them, as well as others, that before were equally unintelligible.

For Thirdly, If we ſhould compare this Diſcourſe with ſome others that we find in the Goſpel, we ſhall find reaſon to ſay, that they were really as difficult to be underſtood as this. And we may ſafely challenge any Man to ſay, why they might not as eaſily underſtand

ſtand this, as a great many other ſayings that were ſpoken to them.

A great many of ſuch Diſcourſes might eaſily be inſtanced in, but I ſhall chuſe to inſtance in one immediatly preceding this. 'Tis v. 51. of that Sixth of St. *John, I am the living Bread which came down from Heaven, if any Man Eat of this Bread, he ſhall live for ever, and the Bread that I will give is my Fleſh, which I will give for the Life of the World.* It cannot be denied, but theſe words are as intricate and hard to be underſtood, as theſe in v. 53. that we are diſcourſing of, and the 52. verſe tells us, the Jews as little underſtood the meaning of it; and yet it is moſt certain that in theſe words he did reſpect this Sacramental Eating of his Fleſh. For his giving his Fleſh for the Life of the World, muſt have reſpect to his Death and Paſſion, by which the great Atonement was made. And we have no other way of Eating his Fleſh, as the Bread of Life, or the Living Bread, which came down from Heaven, but only our feeding on it in this Sacrament, in which we doe Feaſt on the Memorials of his Death and Paſſion, and as St. *Paul* here ſpeaks, ſhew forth the Lord's Death till he come.

This Inſtance will wholly take off the force of the Objection; and not only ſo, but be advantage to us; for if theſe Words do plainly refer to the Sacrament, although they be ſo unintelligible, then nothing hinders, but that

the

the other may ſo too, although they were ſo intricate, and could not well be underſtood when they were ſpoken. And it will be a good Argument that our Saviour hath reſpect to the ſame thing, in both Verſes, ſince the Phraſe in both is evidently the ſame alſo.

4. But Fourthly, to iſſue this conteſt fully, It is certain this Objection will equally lye againſt the ſenſe of theſe words that ſome contend for, as againſt this of ours. For if nothing elſe were intended here, but only believing in Chriſt, and believing his Doctrine, and feeding on it by Faith, as ſome expound them: Yet it is plain the Words are as unintelligible in that ſenſe, as ours. And it is full as hard to underſtand, how Eating the Fleſh, and Drinking the Blood of the Son of God, ſhould ſignifie bare believing on him, as that it ſhould mean the Sacramental feeding on the Memorials and Symbols of his Body and Blood, and I think, a great deal more.

I dare truſt any conſidering Perſon to determine between theſe two, and to ſay which of the Senſes and Interpretations appears the more forced. There is a fair Propriety of ſpeaking in the one, and the whole Chriſtian Church, and the beſt and moſt Learned Fathers of it, have retained and uſed it to this day. But to expreſs bare believing, by Eating the Fleſh of the Son of God, and Drinking his Blood, is a mighty ſtrained way of ſpeaking, and ſuch as can hardly be paralleld in

in any Language, and of which the aſſertors are hard put to it to give any tolerable reaſon, or any plain Inſtance; though I know ſome very Learned Men contend for that Expoſition.

By theſe things I think this Objection fully ſatisfied, and that we may ſafely underſtand thoſe words to intend an abſolute neceſſity of this Sacrament in order to Salvation.

But that I may not be miſtaken, I muſt have leave a little further to explain the ſenſe of this aſſertion. When I ſpeak therefore of a neceſſity of this in order to Salvation, I would be underſtood to put in theſe two Explications.

1. That we ſpeak of Salvation upon Chriſtian Principles. I have nothing to doe to judge them that are without (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) nor to determine upon what conditions their Salvation is attainable. It concerns not us to enquire by what Rules and Meaſures God will judge them, but only to know by what Laws we ſhall be dealt with, and in what method we can hope for Salvation.

2. That when I ſpeak of this being neceſſary to Salvation, I mean it neceſſary to all that can, and all that may receive it. I know but two things that can be thought Diſpenſations from this Duty; an abſolute incapacity, and an abſolute impoſſibility.

The firſt can only take place in Infants, and thoſe that are diſtracted, or groſsly ignorant.

rant. I think Antiquity ſtrained this neceſſity too far, when it made it neceſſary for Infants to Communicate, as well as others. And the caſe is the ſame with diſtracted perſons, and thoſe that are groſsly and invincibly ignorant: There are ſuch things neceſſary to attend this Duty, that ſuch perſons are altogether uncapable of, as Faith in Chriſt Jeſus, a mighty Thankfulneſs to God for ſending him into the World, and a joyful Commemorating the benefits of his Death and Paſſion. Theſe things Infants, *&c.* are utterly uncapable of performing, and therefore to them this Service cannot be thought neceſſary. For this is moſt certain, and the Notion of Gods goodneſs and juſtice will ſecure the Truth of it, That God will never require that of Men, nor condemn them for the not doing that, which they were utterly uncapable of doing.

2. The other, which I call an Impoſſibility of doing this ſervice, can never concern us, or any Chriſtians that live in Church-Communion, where the Ordinances of Religion are obſerved, and the Sacraments conſtantly Adminiſtred.

But I put it down, becauſe it is poſſible, that a Chriſtian may live in places where theſe are not to be had, and where there is not a Chriſtian Church, that he can Communicate with; in this caſe I do not doubt but God will have Mercy inſtead of Sacrifice, and accept the will, and the Man's hearty de-

ſire

ſire to Communicate if he could, inſtead of the deed. For it is as certain upon the Reaſons of Divine Goodneſs, and Juſtice too, that a Man ſhall never be condemned for the not doing of that, which it was abſolutely impoſſible for him to doe.

But, as I ſaid but now, this concerns us very little, or not at all, who may Communicate if we pleaſe, and whom Providence hath cauſed to live in the Communion of a Church, which not only requires all her Children to be frequent in this Service, but Adminiſters it in a way, that is truly Chriſtian and Primitive, and againſt which its greateſt Enemies we ſee have no exception, but ſuch as (when Intereſt calls on them) they can eaſily ſurmount. For any of us therefore willfully to neglect and turn our backs upon this Sacrament (as too many of us doe) is not only to want, but to contemn and neglect it. And it hath been ever taught as a Truth in the Chriſtian Church, that though the want of the Sacraments in ſome few Caſes might not be damning, yet the contempt of them moſt certainly was ſo.

SECT. 4

AND now I think I have ſaid enough in confirmation of this Truth, That one great end of this Inſtitution is to make us actual partakers of the Benefit of what Chriſt hath done for us, and that it is really neceſſary in order thereto.

2. I proceed therefore to what I promiſed in the ſecond place, *i. e.* to improve this to the preſent purpoſe of often Eating this Bread, and Drinking this Cup. And this I ſhall doe by naming only to you ſome of the Benefits that were intended to us by Chriſts Death, and are confined to us by this Chriſtian Symbol of it; I ſhall at preſent mention only theſe three: The Pardon of our Sins: The aſſiſtances of Gods Grace and Spirit to doe our Duty: And the aſſuring us of a Reſurrection, and a bleſſed Immortality.

1. The Pardon of our Sins. For this was the deſign and purpoſe of Chriſts Death, to offer up himſelf as the great Treſpaſs Offering to God, and by ſhedding his Blood, to make the great Atonement for the Sins of Mankind. And ſo we know the Scriptures ſpeak plainly of it.

Now in this Sacrament we Eat the Fleſh of this great Expiatory Sacrifice, and Drink the Blood

Blood of the Attonement, on purpoſe to convey to us, and aſſure us of the effect of both, *i. e.* the full Remiſſion and Pardon of all our Sins.

Were it needful, I might ſhew you, how much more God doth for us, and for our Comfort and Satisfaction in this, than he ever did for the Jews. For it is certain, they were never permitted to Eat the Fleſh of the great Treſpaſs Offering; *for that*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 13. 11. *was burnt without the Camp:* Nor to taſte the Blood of that Attonement, *For that the High Prieſt carried into the Holy of Holies, and he himſelf was never ſuffered to taſt of it.* —— But in this God affords greater favour to us, and permits us to partake of both theſe, on purpoſe to give us the fuller aſſurance of the actual Pardon of our Sins, in and by the Blood of Chriſt.

Now let me beg you to conſider if this be not a good Argument for our frequency in this Service. Doe we know what the Guilt of Sin is, and what will be its Puniſhment? Doe we know how bleſſed he is whoſe Sins are forgiven, and whoſe Tranſgreſſions are covered? Doe we know how daily we contract freſh Guilts and what need therefore we have of daily Pardon? Doe not we find what interruptions our Sins give every day to our Hopes and Joys, and what conſtant neceſſity there is of repairing our Languiſhments? If we know theſe things we know

what a Complication of Arguments there is for our frequent Communicating in this Service, in which we receive fresh Testimonies of Gods Favour towards us, and new assurances of his Grace, and sue out our Pardon anew, and have it ratified, and confirmed, under the visible Seals of the Almighty God.

2. The second great effect of Christs Death, in which we partake in this Service, is the assistance of his Grace and Spirit to doe our Duty, as is becoming Pardoned Persons, and necessary to the purposes of Salvation.

The purchasing this for Good Men was one great end of the Passion and Death of the Son of God, without which all the Expiations and Pardons possible had been unavailable to Salvation; because the bare Remission of Sin, without actual Obedience and Holiness, is not sufficient to instate Men into Glory.

Now the Communicating in the Holy Sacrament is Communicating in this happy effect of Christs Death, and other Performances; and therefore is excellently Styled by the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. *The being made to Drink into one Spirit*; *i. e.* to be interested and entitled to the Influences and Communications of that Blessed Spirit of God, which our Saviour, *Joh.* 17. 38. calls *a Fountain of Living Water*, which should not only quench the thirst

thirſts of Good Men, but convey Spirit and Vigor to them, to ſupport them againſt all faintings, and to enable them to paſs through all the difficulties in the way of Duty: Or, in the phraſe of the Prophet, *To run and not be weary, to walk and not faint.*

Now I beg but any Good Man to conſult his own condition, conſider what his Weakneſſes and Decays are, how often his Spirits lag and tyre, how frequently he either ſits down in the Wilderneſs, or retires in his thoughts towards *Egypt* again: And then tell me if his Spiritual Repaſts and Refreſhments be not as daily needful as his Natural: If he feel not conſtant neceſſity of freſh and new ſupplies from this great Fountain of ſtrength: And whether his Experience doth not teach him, that as it is the Grace of God that enclines him to will and purpoſe, and doe ſomething; ſo whether leſs then daily Communications from the ſame Grace can enable him to perſevere and continue in the ſame to the end: And if ſo, whether not only Prudence, but a neceſſary reſpect to his own good, and ſupply in theſe caſes, doe not call on him to partake daily (I mean as frequently as he can) in that which is appointed as the means, and conveyance of theſe ſo neceſſary Influences, and ſupplies of Gods Spirit.

3. The laſt effect of theſe things I ſhall mention at preſent, is, the aſſuring of all Good Men of a Reſurrection, and a future

Immortality. What Chriſt hath done for Mankind was to this purpoſe among others, to aſſure them of a future ſtate, and thoſe bleſſed Rewards and Joys that Good Men ſhould be made Partakers of in it. And his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion aſſure this ſo fully, that doubting of it is for ever unreaſonable after them.

And Communicating in the Sacrament is even a viſible Pledge and Aſſurance of this to us. And ſo our Saviour ſpeaks plainly in this, *Joh.* 6. 54, 57, 58. *Whoſo Eateth my Fleſh and Drinketh my Blood hath Eternal Life, and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day. As the Living Father hath ſent me, and I live by the Father, ſo he that Eateth me, even he ſhall live by me. This is that Bread which came down from Heaven; not as your Fathers did Eat Manna, and are dead; he that Eateth of this Bread ſhall live for ever.* Which words are plain to this purpoſe, and need no Comment or Paraphraſe to make them plainer. I only add, that Antiquity allways taught, and ſpake accordingly. And *Ignatius* calls the Sacrament Φάρμακον ἀθανασίας, *i. e.* the medicine of immortality, on that Tree of Life that grows in the midſt of the Church: Which is the preſent Paradiſe of God, and doth as certainly aſſure the immortality of all Good Men, as that Primitive Sacrament at the firſt was created to doe.

Now I beg Men to conſider what an Argument,

gument this alſo is for the frequency of this Service. He that conſiders what an Argument and Motive to all Chriſtian Obedience, the ſenſe of Immortality, and the Glories of a future ſtate are, and withal conſiders how oft Good Men loſe the ſight and ſenſe of it, how the preſent Entertainments of ſenſe fill our minds, and juſtle out the Objects of Faith, and wear off the Impreſſions that theſe leave upon our Souls: How abſolutely needful it is for a Good Man to live by Faith, and to cheer, and keep up his Reſolutions and Endeavours with future Expectations, finds ſo many great Reaſons for his frequent Repetition of this Service, in which his Faith is ſtrengthned, his Hopes confirmed, and his Endeavours animated and refreſhed with the ſenſe of that Crown that attends him, and the ſurprizing Glories that are prepared for all thoſe that continue faithful unto Death. Which God of his Infinite Mercy enable every one of us to doe.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Divided into five Sections. The Fourth end of this Service is mentioned, and shewed wherein our Union to Christ consisteth. In the Second it is shewed how the Holy Sacrament is effective of this Union. In the Third the Argument is improved from the First thing in which this Union consisteth, in which the necessity of Church-Communion, and the danger of Schism is a little largely considered. In the Fourth the Argument is improved from the second Instance in which this Union consists, viz. *an intimate Love between Christ and Good Men, and how much it concerns Men to keep up a strong sense of it. In the Fifth the Argument is improved from the Third thing in which this Union consisteth: Being acted by the Divine Spirit: How much it concerns us to secure this, and what the Blessings and advantages of it are.*

4. I Proceed now to a Fourth end of this Institution, which will afford us another very good Argument, for the often Eating this Bread, and Drinking this Cup;

and

and that is this, That it was Inſtituted to be a means of our actual and cloſe Union unto Jeſus Chriſt.

This is a ſubject that might afford matter enough for a large Diſcourſe. But I ſhall endeavour to contract all that I ſhall ſay on it to theſe three heads.

1. A little to explain to you this Union.
2. To ſhew how this Holy Service is effective of it.
3. To improve it to that end of frequent obſerving it, which this Diſcourſe is contending for.

1. I begin with the firſt, which is to explain the Nature of this Union unto Chriſt, and ſhew wherein it conſiſts.

My Brethren, I doe not know whether any one Doctrine in Chriſtian Religion hath been more abuſed and perplexed by the whimſical Diſcourſes of Men in our Age, than this hath been, nor any one thing that hath afforded larger matter for Fanciful, Enthuſiaſtical Men, to Cant and make a Noiſe with, and Miniſter ſome occaſion to thoſe high pretences they have made above their Brethren. This hath been reputed one of the Secrets of the Goſpel, and a great Myſtery in Chriſtianity. And truly ſo it is, and muſt for ever continue ſo, if we had nothing to guide us into the Knowledge of it, but the Diſcourſes of ſome Men who pretend moſtly to underſtand it.

It

It will not be needful for me to give you an account of theſe Mens Diſcourſes about this thing. It will be much more conducing both to my purpoſe, and the end of this Diſcourſe, to acquaint you plainly and honeſtly what you are to conceive concerning this matter.

And that I ſuppoſe you may ſufficiently doe by conſidering that it conſiſts in theſe three things.

1. In Church-Memberſhip.
2. In Intimate Love and Affection.
3. In partaking in the Influences, and receiving the Communications of Chriſts Spirit. All that the Scripture ſpeaks of this matter, I think, may be reduced to theſe three heads.

1. In Church-Memberſhip; *i. e.* in being a True Member of the Chriſtian Church. This you ſhall find in no leſs than twelve ſeveral places in the New Teſtament, called the Body of Chriſt, and he ſaid to be the head of it. And the Union of particular Chriſtians to Chriſt reſults from their being Members of this Body, and is effected by it. We truly ſay every Member in the Body is united to the Head, and yet we know every Member is not immediately joyned to it: Some are nearer, and ſome placed farther off, and yet all truly United to him.

This the Apoſtle ſets forth moſt plainly and clearly, 1 *Cor.* 12. 27. *Now you are the Body*

of

of Chriſt, and Members in particular. The Church is Chriſts Body, and you in particular, by being Members of the one, are ſo of the other alſo. And the ſame you ſhall find repreſented under many ſimilitudes in Holy Scripture; as to inſtance in a few: The Church is Chriſts Temple, and every True Member of it is a lively ſtone in this Temple, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks plainly, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. the Church is the Flock of Chriſt, who is therefore called the great Shepherd, and every True Member of this Church is one of Chriſts Sheep. And the ſame is intimated in ſome other Emblems alſo, which it is not now needful to repeat.

This is the plain Truth in this matter, and 'tis eaſily underſtood, the Union of particular Chriſtians unto Chriſt conſiſts in their being True Members of that Body whereof he is the Head.

Secondly, This Union doth alſo imply a dear and cloſe Affection between Chriſt and Good Men. For Love is of an Uniting Nature, and we ſay of dear Friends and Lovers, that they are United, and adhere one to the other, as we uſe to ſay of Enemies, that they are at a great diſtance from each other.

And if you obſerve it, you ſhall find the ſame manner of ſpeaking retained in the Holy Scripture. The Soul of *Jonathan* was knit unto the Soul of *David*, *i. e.* they were dear and paſſionate Lovers one of the other.

This

This is all that the Scripture means in many of thoſe high ſimilitudes that it uſeth to this purpoſe, and that Men have ſtrained to ſuch idle purpoſes, as ſome have done: As for Example, that of Chriſt's being the Husband, and the Church his Spouſe which the Apoſtle makes uſe of, *Eph* 5. and upon the account of which he ſeems to call Chriſt and his Church one Fleſh: The reaſon and purpoſe to which it is uſed, is to repreſent what a mighty reſpect and Love there is betwixt theſe two, after the Example of which Married Perſons are there exhorted to Love one another, and this is all that there is in it.

And the ſame alſo is intended in calling Chriſt the Head of his Church, and Good Men his Members in particular, *viz.* to intimate that there is as great a reſpect, and as concerning a regard and care between Chriſt and theſe, as there is between the Head and Members of the ſame Natural Body.

And Chriſt is called the Shepherd of the Church, becauſe he loves it, and takes as tender a care of it, as a Shepherd doth, or can doe of his Flock.

3. This Union doth likewiſe conſiſt in the Influences and Communications likewiſe of Chriſts Spirit unto Good Men. For, as this is the great Cement and Band of Union among the Members of the Natural Body, which are ſaid to be United not ſo much becauſe they are joyned one to another, and United together in

the

the ſame common Maſs, but that they are animated and actuated, influenced and governed by the ſame Spirit. So truly the beſt account I can give of this Union of Chriſtians to Chriſt, reſults from this, that they are acted and influenced by the ſame Spirit. For ſo Chriſt you know himſelf promiſed, that he would ſend his Holy Spirit to guide, govern and direct his Holy Apoſtles. And we muſt not think it was intended to be their Sole and only Prerogative, but to be enjoyed by all Good Men after them in their proportions, and in thoſe meaſures that were needful for them.

And you find frequent mention of the ſame thing in many places in the New Teſtament, where Chriſtians are called the Houſe of God, the Temple of his Spirit, with a reſpect to his preſence with them, and aſſiſtance of them in all needful Inſtances. The places are too many to name in which this is expreſsed.

This is all the Account I can find the Scriptures give of this Myſtery of our Union unto Chriſt; and if you pleaſe to conſider it in theſe notions, it is a plain and intelligible thing, your minds will not be puzzled nor perplexed how to underſtand and conceive of it. It conſiſts in our being true Members of his Church, entitled to his deareſt Love, and aſſiſted and acted by the gracious Influences of his Spirit.

SECT.

SECT. 2.

2. I Proceed now to ſhew you how Effective the Holy Sacrament is upon all theſe, in which this Union conſiſts, upon which Account it is commonly ſaid by Divines to be a means of our cloſer Union unto Chriſt.

1. Then it is the higheſt and trueſt expreſſion of our Communion with the Chriſtian Church; and truly for my part I doe not underſtand, upon what reaſon any adult Perſon can be reputed a Member of this Church that doth not joyn in this Service.

It is not coming to Church and hearing our Sermons and Service, that preſently makes Men Members of it: For the Apoſtle himſelf ſuppoſes a Heathen, and an Unbeliever, may doe all this.

Nay it is not the joyning in Prayer with us, falling down upon their Knees, and Worſhipping the ſame God: For I am ſure the Penitents of old did this, and yet were not admitted to full Communion with the Church; nor taken to be of it, according to the ſenſe of Primitive Chriſtianity.

Nay, further yet, I doe not ſee that Men ſhould be reputed Members of the Church only upon the Account of Baptiſm; I grant this

this is the Door by which we enter the Church; and ſo great is the Love and Mercy of God to Mankind, that it is ſufficient for an Infant State, and intitles Children to all the great Bleſſings of Gods Covenant of Mercy and Grace.

But there is more required from adult Perſons, and Antiquity never did repute thoſe perfectly in the Communion of the Church, who did not joyn in this great Service of it; nay, it did threaten Excommunication to all thoſe, that being in Peace with the Church, *i. e.* under no Cenſures of it, did abſent themſelves from it.

There is an Expreſſion *Pſ.* 50. 5. worthy, methinks, of conſideration in this matter, *Gather my Saints together, thoſe that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice.* And if you look into the Conſtituion of the Paſſover, you ſhall find that he that obſerved it not, was ſo far from being reputed an *Iſraelite*, that he was to be cut off from his People, and the leaſt that that Expreſſion can denote, was, that he was to be Excommunicate, and no more taken to be a Member of Gods Houſe.

I think theſe things may well be applyed in our preſent caſe, and will warrant the Analogy, that none are perfect and true Members of the Church, that doe not joyn in all the Services of it, and particularly in this, which for this reaſon perhaps is ſo often

called Κοινονία, by the Apoſtle, which form of ſpeaking we alſo retain, calling it the Communion, as if it were that Service eſpecially, in which Chriſtian Communion doth conſiſt.

2. It is the beſt Expedient Chriſtian Religion hath to entitle us viſibly and ſenſibly to the Love of Chriſt.

There is nothing that can be ſuppoſed to be of equal effect with this to inflame our Hearts with the Love of Chriſt; I mean on our parts; nothing ſo likely to affect our Souls with Wonders and Tranſports of Joy and Love; as to taſte the Viſible Pledges of his dying Love, and feed upon the Sacred Symbols of his Body and Blood, which were broken and ſhed for our ſakes. And I am ſure the Experiences of all Good Men can teſtify the Truth of what I ſay.

And then we may reaſonably think, that nothing can more ſecure us of Chriſts Love to us: We were dear to our Saviour, we may well think, when he hung upon the Croſs for our ſakes, and laid down his Life, and Prayed for us.

But what doe we think we are, when he ſees us affected with a ſenſe of this Love, Weeping for Joy and Wonder, at the greatneſs of it, and giving it that effect upon us that was intended by it? When we feed on the Sacrifice of his Body and Blood, and handle the Sacred Symbols of it, with equal ſurprizes of Reverence and Joy; when we

ma

make him both the Joy and Food of our Souls, and think no adheſions of Faith and Love cloſe enough, unleſs we convert him even into our own Subſtance, and be transformed into his likeneſs, and become even one Nature with our dear Lord.

Good Men are always dear, and joyned in Unions of Love to him, but they are never more truly and ſenſibly ſo, than in this Service.

3. This is the moſt viſible, firm aſſurance of the Influences of Chriſts Spirit. There is no doubt but Good Men are always acted and aſſiſted with this good Spirit, according to the promiſe of our Saviour, *Joh.* 4. 14. *The Water that I ſhall give, ſhall be a Well of Water ſpringing up in him to Eternal Life*; *i. e.* the Spirit that I beſtow on Good Men ſhall be a Fountain of Life, and Aid, ſtill bubling up, and ſupplying his Neceſſities.

But there is no doubt but there are ſome times, in which this Holy Spirit takes ſtronger ſeizures upon Good Men, and gives them more ſenſible touches of his preſence, deſcends more viſibly, and lets them feel the Vital Influences of his Grace in greater Experiences.

And certainly no time can be thought more likely for theſe things, than when we celebrate this Holy Sacrament, in which we feed upon that Spiritual Food of Chriſts Body and Blood, which is therefore called Spiritual and Living

Bread, ἀληθῶς βρῶσις, καὶ ἀληθῶς πόσις, as he calls it, *Joh.* 6. 55. Meat indeed, and Drink indeed, because it is the Vehicle of this Blessed Spirit, and the means in which he is conveyed to the Souls of Good Men.

And therefore this is called by the Apostle, 1. *Cor.* 12. 13. a being made to drink into one Spirit, and in another place a being partaker of the Table of the Lord, in opposition to the Pagan Rite of Feasting with Devils, by which they hoped for the *Afflatus* of the Evil Spirit, and a more than ordinary Agitation of the same. The plain meaning is this, that in this Service larger measures of the Spirit are given, and greater Influences of it imparted by these Sacred Symbols and Vehicles of it: There can be no time more fit and probable, for Christ to doe thus to Good Men. And I am perswaded the Experiences of Good Men can attest the certainty, as according to the Probability.

SECT. 3.

3. AND now I dare trust any Man to say, if this be not a great Argument for the frequency of this Service, and whether a very little art will not serve to improve it to that purpose. Who doth not see that our happiness and our safety depends upon our Union with Christ? And that our

our Comfort reſults chiefly from a ſenſe of our being ſo? And therefore if to be happy, and to know that we are ſo, be things worth deſiring, they become Arguments for the frequency of this Service; and as much as we value, and as we hope for either of theſe, we ſhould make Conſcience of that, which is ſo ſerviceable, and conducive unto both.

But I ſhall not content my ſelf to repreſent the ſtrength of the Argument thus in the groſs, but ſhall conſider what each of the forenamed particulars can contribute to the inforcement of it; and then of what mighty effect they muſt needs be, when we unite them together in our Meditations.

1. Then, The firſt thing in which this Union conſiſts, and of which the Holy Sacrament is very effective, is Communion with the Chriſtian Church, of which Chriſt Jeſus is the Head.

I muſt not now repeat, that we are united to Chriſt, by being Members of this, nor ſtay to ſhew how we hold Communion with this, by being Members of that National Church, that is really a true branch of it. I muſt not ſtay to ſhew, how truly this Church of *England* may lay claim to being this, and upon what grounds, and how weak all the *Romaniſts* Arguments, by which they would argue her Guilty of Schiſm, are; nor now ſtand to prove

what a high Act of Communion partaking in this Service is: All that I have now incumbent upon me is to improve its being this, into an Argument for the often Eating this Bread, and Drinking this Cup.

And that I ſhall doe upon theſe three Accounts.

1. By Conſidering how much our Hopes of Salvation depend upon our keeping in the Communion of the Church.

2. How frequent the Temptations in this Age are to deſert or undervalue it.

3. How much therefore it muſt concern us to be frequent in that Service, that will more ſecurely fix us in this Communion.

Theſe three conſiderations will drive the Argument from this conſideration to a conſiderable Iſſue; and therefore I muſt beg a ſerious conſideration from all that hear me.

1. I beg it may be conſidered, how much our Hopes of Salvation depend upon our keeping in the Communion of the Church. I ſpeak now of our rational Hopes, and not of thoſe extravagant, groundleſs ones, that Multitudes of Men entertain, and periſh with, and of Salvation too in an Ordinary way, *&c.*

He that will be pleaſed to govern his Hopes by the plain declarations and meaſures of Scripture, or by the thoughts and Judgment

of thoſe Good Men in Primitive times, that beſt underſtood the ſenſe and purport of it, will preſently find how vain the Hopes of thoſe Men are, that expect Salvation out of the pale of the Church.

The Scriptures, when they come to ſtate the intendment of Chriſts great Performances for the Redemption of Mankind, ſeem to confine it only to the Church; thus, *Acts* 10. 28. he is ſaid to have purchaſed the Church with his own Blood. And *Eph.* 5. 25. *As Chriſt loved the Church, and gave himſelf for it,* &c. And in v. 23. of the ſame Chapter, he is called the Head of the Church, and the Saviour of the Body. From all which places and many more, that ſpeak conſonantly to the ſame purpoſe, it is clear, that the Bleſſed effects of Chriſts Redemption, are intended only for the Church, *i. e.* for thoſe who believing his Holy Doctrine, combine themſelves with that Body of Chriſtians, that being united together by the ſame bands of Faith and Love, and regulated by thoſe Orders that he hath preſcribed, combine together in the Publick Service and Worſhip of him.

For it is moſt plain and evident from Holy Scripture, that Chriſt did never intend to create Chriſtians at large, or purpoſe, that it ſhould be enough for a Man to take up the bare Belief of the Goſpel, but he did over and beſides this, deſign to incorporate Chriſtians into a firm and cloſe Communion, to

conſociate and range them into a regular, well ordered Body, of which he himſelf deſigned to be Head; to which they all being united by the Bands of Faith, and a viſible Profeſſion, and to one another by the Ligatures of Love and Charity, and Chriſtian Communion, ſhould receive Life and Motion, ſupplies of Spirits and Food, juſt as the Parts and Members in the Natural Body doe, by their being United to the head, and one another.

And that this is no wanton Speculation, nor a Notion only invented to ſerve a purpoſe, appears clearly from this one conſideration among many others; that there are more Precepts given to Chriſtians, and more Inſtances of Duty required from them in this Capacity than in any others. There are but a few Duties and Precepts that concern them in their ſingle and perſonal Capacities, in compariſon of thoſe that relate to them as they are conſociated together, and Members of the ſame Church. Temperance Chaſtity and Purity go near to comprehend all the one, but thoſe that injoyn Love and Charity, Peace and Unity, Concord and Unanimity, ſpeaking the ſame thing, and being of the ſame mind, eſchewing Factions, and every thing that tended to introduce differences among them, *&c.* are indeed almoſt innumerable.

And then if from hence we proceed to conſider what the thoughts and Doctrines of the firſt and beſt Chriſtians were in this matter,

we

we ſhall find that they always ſpoke and taught conſonantly to this ſenſe of theſe Scriptures. They unanimouſly declared, that *Extra Eccleſiam non eſt Salus*; and to that purpoſe commonly compared the Church of Chriſt to *Noah*'s Ark, out of which there was no eſcaping for any, but all periſhed in a terrible Abyſs and Inundation. The Learned know that I ſpeak Truth in this, and the Unlearned that have read any of our own Books relating to this matter, can ſcarcely have miſſed quotations enough to this purpoſe.

And upon this Belief have all the mighty Outcries againſt Schiſm, and the terrible denunciations againſt it, ſo very common among the Ancient Fathers, been founded. They looked upon no Sin to be more certainly damning, nor thought any Sinners of any denomination to be in a more inevitably deſperate condition, than Schiſmaticks are.

Nay, which is much more, they thought the guilt of this Sin could preponderate, and weigh down the worth of all other, even the moſt heroick acts of Chriſtian Vertue, and render them all unacceptable unto God. I ſhall give you but two Inſtances of this, but they are remarkable ones, and of Men whoſe Authority and Names are as venerable in the Chriſtian Church, as any others you can eaſily name; I mean St. *Cyprian* and St. *Auguſtine*.

The former ſaith moſt plainly, that even Martyrdom

Martyrdom it ſelf is not able to atone the guilt of Schiſm, and that therefore dying to atteſt the Truth of Chriſtian Faith, and ſealing it with a Man's Blood, was of no acceptance with God, if a Man at the ſame time were without Charity, and had ſeparated himſelf from the Communion of the Chriſtian Church; and he as well as many others quote thoſe Paſſages of St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 13. at the beginning, for the Authority of what they ſay: *Though I give my Body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing.*

St. *Auguſtine* is more full and poſitive to the ſame purpoſe, "*Conſtituamus ergo*, &c. "Let us ſuppoſe a Man who is Chaſt, Conti-"nent, void of Covetouſneſs, who is no Ido-"later, Hoſpitable, and Bountiful to thoſe in "want, Enemy to no Man, not Contentious "but Patient, Quiet, without Emulation or "Envy, Sober, Frugal, but a Heretick (*i. e.* a "Schiſmatick, for ſo he means in that place) "*nulli dubium eſt*, no Man doubts, but for that "very reaſon, becauſe he is a Schiſmatick, "he ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Where it is obſervable (as my Author remarks upon this Paſſage) that St. *Auguſtine* doth not declare it only as his own ſingle Opinion, but as the Catholick Doctrine in his days: *Nulli dubium eſt*, no Man doubts or queſtions it.

And the great reaſon upon which the ſayings ſupported themſelves, was this, no

only becauſe the Apoſtle had declared Schiſm to be a Sin, a Damning Sin, and a Work of the Fleſh, and declared Schiſmaticks to be carnal Men, whatever Pretences of Purity and Sanctity they might make above other Men (as Schiſmaticks in all Ages ever have done:) No, nor yet becauſe it diſturbed the Peace and Unity of Chriſts Church, and was of all other things the moſt fatally deſtructive to it, conſidered as a Society.

But chiefly, becauſe it actually cuts Men off from the Communion of the Church, which is the Body of Chriſt, to which all the bleſſed effects of his Redemption, and the Communications of his Spirit are appropriate, and by Union to which any ſingle Man can hope to partake of the ſame. —— Upon this they declared there were more hopes of the moſt profligate Sinner in the Church, than of a Schiſmatick who was out of it: Juſt as there may be ſome hope of the moſt diſtempered and ulcerated Member, while it is united to the Body, and may by receiving Blood and Spirits from it, and the help of ſome external Applications, be healed again; but there can be no manner of hope for that Member, that is actually ſeparated and cut off from the Body. For this cauſe was Excommunication ſo dreaded of old, *&c.*

I would to God Men would be pleaſed in this Age, to call to mind theſe things, and not to think themſelves wiſer than thoſe Good Men of

of old, in whom the true Spirit of Christianity Flourished, and who transmitted the Truth of it to us, Sealed with the Testimony of their own Blood. Were this Spirit once retrieved among us again, we should not need to contend so much for these things. Which brings me to

2. The second thing for the deducing our present Argument; and that is to consider how common and frequent the Temptations in this Age are to desert this Communion, or to make it an Indifferent thing whether we keep to it, or not.

The Truth is, my Brethren, we are cast to live in an Age, that though it pretend mightily to Christianity, and the Knowledge and Love of it, above almost any that hath preceded, yet hath almost lost two Articles of the Apostolical Creed, The Catholick Church, and the Communion of Saints. Some Men take no care to remember these Articles, perhaps are yet to learn there are such; but abundance take no care to understand, and consider what is the import and meaning of them. And there are many differing Sects of Men among us, that not only designedly defeat the Effect and Purport of them, but plead stoutly and contend earnestly for the Innocency of doing so.

Men that look upon Schism but as a Spiritual Scar-crow to affright Birds and Fools, and deride Excommunication as a tool only

to

to affect Children; that ridicule the name of Church, and the Diſcourſes about Communion with it, as Inſtances only of Prieſt or State Craft, but not any ſuch Momentous things in Chriſtianity, as that the Salvation of Men can be any way concerned in them.

Abundance of Men are yet to learn that there is ſuch a Sin as Schiſm, and that it is not a Word of our own making, and by the way I cannot but remark it, as a conſiderable ſlip in our laſt Tranſlation, to Tranſlate the Greek Word by Sects, Differences, Diſſentions, Diviſions, and not Schiſms, which, it is moſt certain, was moſt conſonant to the Apoſtles deſign, and moſt expreſſive of the Word it ſelf. Some Men have complained of a Party and a Deſign in theſe Tranſlators, but I am not willing to charge it ſo far; though I am able (if need were) to inſtance in ſome other things, that have given too juſt ground for ſuch a cenſure.

But to return, As there are many that are yet to learn there is ſuch a Sin, there are more to ſeek what it is, and no more able to give any tolerable account of it, than a Child is to ſolve the Problems of *Euclide*. And the Truth is, the wonder is the leſs, and the People the more Pardonable, who have lived in an Age of purpoſed confuſion, and been under the Inſtruction and Teaching of Men, who have endeavoured more to make Parties, than to compoſe them, to proſelyte Men to Faction,

and

and not to Religion; and to propagate Schism under the Notion of Reformation, and setting up purer Communions among Men.

And I would to God this were the guilt only of the preceding Age, or the Avowed Factors for Dissentions in this: But, alas! We have some Good Men, and of our own Communion too, to complain of as Accessories to this Unhappiness.

Who by laying so much stress, and talking only of a Necessity of Faith in Christ, and Repentance, and a good Life, and so rarely or almost never pressing the necessity of ancient Belief, and the Obligations to Church-Communion, &c. have given People too much cause to think, that the one was sufficient without the other, and so they took some tolerable care about that, they needed the less to regard the other.

Christianity (to borrow the Words of a late Author) they look upon to be just like a Systeme of Philosophy, and that to believe the chief Articles or Principles of it is enough to denominate a Christian, and to entitle him to all the Promises of the Gospel, and Salvation, though he never have any regard to a Church State, and the Communion of it nor concern himself at all what Church he is of.

This is too common a Belief in this Age, and too much favoured by some Men among us

fro

from whence we may ſafely infer what great care we ought to take of that, which is both falſe and pernicious in it ſelf, and alſo what danger we are in of it, when both our Enemies and our Friends are apt to entrap us into it

Theſe two conſiderations will be good foundations for.

The Third and laſt thing, *i. e.* the driving this preſent Argument to an Iſſue; and no Concluſion, can be more regularly deduced from any Principles.

For if keeping in the Communion of the Church be a thing ſo very neceſſary in it ſelf, that no hopes of Salvation belong to him, that willfully violates and withdraws himſelf from the ſame: And if this be an Age in which both the Doctrines and Practices of Men are ſo rife to the contrary, wherein the Church is rent and torn into ſo many Factions, wherein ſome Men plead for Separation, and moſt Men think it ſo harmleſs and indifferent a thing:

Then if we alſo would not be led away with the Error of theſe Men; if we would defeat the effect of theſe Temptations to us, we ſhould certainly make a great Conſcience, and keep up the conſtant Practice of that, which is ſo high an Act of Communion, as I have ſhewed the Holy Sacrament is.

There are two things that I would beg Liberty to ſpeak a little unto at preſent, without

without Offence to any in this Congregation; the time is now very proper for them.

The firſt is the Practice of Occaſional Communion in our Church; for our worſt and ſharpeſt Adverſaries, it ſeems, will allow this to be Lawful, and Men that have no great ſenſe of our Service and Worſhip, yet can afford ſometimes, when their opportunities and circumſtances of affairs require it, to Communicate with us in the ſame.

To theſe Men, firſt premiſing, that I am really glad that Men will come thus far, and that I am far enough from diſcouraging any that doe thus, the Arms of the Church are open, and ſhe is ready to embrace all, and to cheriſh even the leaſt beginnings and degrees of good in them.

But I would beg them to conſider moſt ſeriouſly, and as they love their own Souls, theſe two or three ſhort things.

1. That if Occaſional Communion with us be Lawful, then conſtant Communion is. If they can without Sin joyn in our Service, and Worſhip ſome times, they may upon the ſame reaſon doe ſo always. For nothing here can vary the Nature of our Worſhip, nor make that a Sin at one time, which is not ſo at another.

2. That to Communicate with the Church upon External, Prudential Motives and Reaſons only,

only is very unbecoming thoſe Principles upon which Good Men always act, and the way in time to expoſe Religion to the Scorn and Drollery of Atheiſts, and confirm them in their Wicked and bold opinion, that Religion is but a Trick and an Art of Craft and Policy.

3. That this Occaſional Communion only, can never take off the Guilt of Schiſm; nor the going to a Church ſometimes attone the Schiſm of joyning with Separate Congregations at others. Remember what the Apoſtle ſaith to thoſe *Corinthians*, that ate at the Table of Chriſt, and yet ſometimes were preſent, and ate of the Sacrifices to Idols too, 1 *Cor.* from 15. to 23. We may as well hope to make a Compremiſal between Vertue and Vice, between Serving God and an Idol, as between Church-Communion and Schiſm, and upon as good grounds expect, that Worſhipping God one time will excuſe our Worſhipping an Idol at another, as that we doe live in the Communion of the Church, becauſe we ſometimes go to that, when at other times we go as freely to Separate and Schiſmatical Conventions.

2. The ſecond thing I would beg a few words for, is Partial Communion. Some Men can hear our Sermons, but not joyn in our Prayers, and many can doe both theſe, that will not joyn with us in our Sacraments.

I have told you in the beginning of my Diſcourſe upon this Period, what a neceſſary Act of Communion this is, and how imperfect all others without it are.

I tell you now but only theſe two things more.

1. That this Act of Communion is as plainly and as abſolutely commanded as any other Service of Religion, and I cannot tell upon what better grounds they can call themſelves Chriſtians, that willfully neglect it, though they perform ſome others: Then thoſe Men may call themſelves Good Men, that pick out ſome commands of God to obey, but ſcruple not to live in the open and wilful neglect and violation of others.

2. That this thing was utterly unknown to Antiquity, and is againſt the conſtant Practice of it. Penitents indeed and Catechumens, they did not permit to Communicate in this Service, but all that were in the Peace of the Church they not only permitted, but commanded to doe ſo, and by the expreſs Canons of ſome Councils, they did threaten Excommunication to all in the Peace of the Church, that after Prayers and Sermon went away, and ſtayed not to joyn in the participation of the Sacrament.

And for Men to doe ſo now is both Scandalous to the Inſtitutions of Chriſt, and the ſetting up a new Sect of Chriſtians, which pure and hone

honeſt Antiquity knew nothing of, but was quite contrary unto, and ſeverely condemned. If the other parts of our Service and Worſhip be Lawful, ſo is this too: And if it be granted needful to Communicate in them, I will undertake to prove, that it as much, or more concerns us all to Communicate in this.

SECT. 4.

2. THe Second thing in which this Union with Chriſt conſiſteth, and of which the Holy Sacrament is very Effective, is Intimate Love and Affection betwixt Chriſt and Good Men.

For as there can never be any time more likely to inflame our hearts with the love of our Saviour, than when we behold the viſible and aſtoniſhing Pledges of his great and wonderful Love to us, in Suffering and Dying for us: So there is none neither, in which we may be more certain of his dear reſpects to us, than when he ſees us with Joy and Tranſport Commemorating his Love, and feeding upon the Sacred Symbols of it. But this I have ſhewed before.

It is now incumbent on me to ſhew what an Argument this alſo is to our frequency in this Service, our often Eating this Bread and Drinking this Cup, and that I ſhall doe in theſe three conſiderations.

1. It is one of the ſtrongeſt encouragements in our way of Duty.

2. It is that which is very ſubject to languiſh and decay in us.

3. It is that which the beſt Men are often apt to call into Queſtion, and to loſe the lively ſenſe of it.

1. It is one of the ſtrongeſt encouragements and ſupports in the way of Duty.

Our hearty Love to Chriſt will make every Duty we owe to him light and eaſie, and enable us to ſurmount all the difficulties or diſcouragements that can encounter us in it. There is no one Paſſion of our Souls that acts more vigorouſly than Love, nor any Argument that can be of greater effect with us. It is the ſtrongeſt and moſt vigorous principle of humane action, and it is not eaſie to ſay what great things it can readily undertake and bring to paſs.

Solus Amor eſt qui nomen difficultatis erubeſcit, ſaith the devout St. *Auguſtine*, *Love alone bluſhes at the name of any difficulty*, and ſcorns to think that any thing ſhould be accounted too hard for it. And this is that which is expreſſed by *Solomon*, *Cant.* 8. 7. *Love is ſtrong as Death, Zeal is hard as the Grave, the Coals thereof are Coals of Fire, which hath a moſt vehement heat. Many Waters cannot quench Love, neither can the Floods drown it.* By all which Metaphoric Expreſſions is repreſented very livelily the gre-

great Efficacy of Divine Love, and how all the greateſt Difficulties and Oppoſitions hinder it not, nor diſcourage it in the way of Duty and Service to its God. For which reaſon Chriſt requires it of the Church, as that Powerful and Pregnant Principle that would aſſure and produce every thing elſe that he required of them.

And it is moſt certain he that is poſſeſſed of our Love, may command every thing elſe eaſily from us; and when our Hearts are really warmed with Love to God and Chriſt, his commands will not be grievous, but every thing he calls for from us will be light and pleaſant. We ſhall ſerve him as cheerfully as *Jacob* did *Laban* for the beautiful *Rachel*, to whom a ſeven years Service ſeemed but as ſome few days. And on the other hand a quick and lively ſenſe of Chriſts Love to us, will be of the very ſame effect too. It is a mighty deadning diſcouragement to Love, and not be Loved again, and though I can doe much for the Perſon I really Love, whether he return me a grateful reſpect, or not; yet when I have aſſurance that our Affection is reciprocal, I have given all the encouragement I can deſire, and ſuch an Argument as nothing can reſiſt.

It is juſt thus in our preſent caſe, when I conſider that I Love but a Saviour who firſt Loved me, and am aſſured that I can never Love him ſo much, but that he Loves me infinitely more, I am then all in a Flame, my reſoluti-

ons are brisk and airy, I fly upon the Wings of Love, and I can deſpiſe and contemn every thing, that would encumber my way of Duty and Service to my Lord, or hinder and ſtop my proceeding in it.

And this is that which St. *Paul* ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. *the Love of Chriſt conſtraineth us* (*i. e.* to be ſo Vigorous and Zealous in ſerving of him, and promoting his Intereſt and Honour in the World, as the Context ſhews) *becauſe we thus judge, that if one dyed for all, then were all dead*, &c. The plain *Engliſh* of which is this, When we ſeriouſly reflect upon the great Love of Chriſt in dying for Mankind, which was in a dead and loſt condition, and poſſeſs our Souls with a due ſenſe of it, we find it of mighty great Efficacy and Power; a Divine Breath that fans up our Souls into a bright Flame, and kindles ſuch Pious reſolutions in us, as nothing, no not death it ſelf can diſcourage.

In a word, to a heart thus inflamed with a ſenſe of Chriſts Love to it, there are no Objections againſt Holineſs, which it cannot eaſily ſolve, no temptations that it cannot baffle, no diſcouragements which it cannot anſwer, no difficulties which it cannot ſurmount; and there is nothing of Support and Argument to engage to it, which this will not readily ſuggeſt and prompt to its thoughts.

Now what an Argument this is to frequency in that Service, which is ſo mighty co-

duci

ducive to this purpoſe, no Man needs be told, but he only that is a ſtranger to himſelf: Every, even the beſt Man finds how ſlow and reſtive his temper is, how often his Reſolutions flag, his Zeal cools, his good purpoſes intermit, his endeavours tyre, and all the Charets of his Soul move heavily in the way of Duty, his Temptations are many, and his Diſcouragements multiply, and he is apt ever and anon to ſit down and deliberate again, and too often hath thoughts of returning back to *Egypt* again.

So that without continual ſupplies of freſh Fewel to his Flames, they will expire and die, his warmth and vigour will be remitted, the ambient cold will chill his Spirits, and the ſtorms and rains abroad extinguiſh his Light.

But by frequency in this Service he will be enabled to keep it alive, bring oyl to feed his Fire of Love, keep it ſtill burning with a bright Flame, and thereby preſerve a conſtant vigour and cheerfulneſs of Spirit, in ſerving and doing Duty to his God.

2. Eſpecially if ſecondly, we conſider that this Love of Chriſt is ſo very apt to languiſh and decay in us.

The Temper and Humours of Men are naturally deſultory and changeable, and very rarely continue long the ſame, yea although the Objects of our reſpects doe not alter, nor our own Circumſtances change. I need but

appeal to common Experience for the Truth of this.

And if it be thus in respect of all these things that are near us, and with which we daily converse, it will be the less Wonder if our Affections vary towards an Object that is so far distant from us, and out of our sight, with whom we converse but by Faith, and can enjoy but by an inward sense, and relish of the Spirit, which is immured here in Flesh, and tinctured by it, surrounded with sensual Passions, and easily affected by corporeal Impressions.

To which if we add the hurries and bustles of Worldly business, that summon our regards and care, the Temptations and Allurements of sense, that rival our better Love, and are continually courting our respects from him: Charms that are always present with us, and unceasantly soliciting of us. And which is more, are so very pleasing to a great part within us, that sides strongly with them, and naturally covets their Embraces.

I say, if we lay all these things together, we shall no longer wonder, why this Love of Christ is so very apt to decay and expire in us: Nor need to be told what great need we have of continual care, and all possible Endeavours to cherish the same in our Souls, to guard our selves against the insinuations of whatever rivals our Lord, and by all the Arts that we can use, fortifie our Love, and render

it

it Impregnable againſt all the aſſaults and batteries of ſenſe.

To which purpoſe, ſince this Holy Service may ſtand us in ſuch great ſtead, it is Argument enough to engage us to frequency in it.

3. And yet this Argument may receive ſome additional ſtrength from the third conſideration yet behind; that this Love of Chriſt, that is ſo mighty a ſupport and encouragement unto Duty, is a thing that the beſt Men living are apt to loſe the ſenſe of, and call into Queſtion; upon which they are apt to be dull and heavy, and liſtleſs unto Duty.

There is no Faith ſo ſtrong in this World, but it is often ſubject to decays and doubts, nor any Man ſo aſſuredly joyful in the ſenſe of Divine Love towards him, but that he many times grows doubtful and penſive, and is apt to call the ſame into Queſtion.

I believe there are ſome great miſtakes among Men about deſertions (as ſome call them) and the withdrawings of the Spirit, and that many have miſtaken their own Melancholy, and the natural alterations of their own Tempers for the ſame.

But notwithſtanding this, I doe not at all doubt, but every Good Man feels ſomething like this, though it may be aſcribed to another cauſe. For Men Travel here in an uneven Road, they doe not always walk upon an Hill in which the Sun is always in their view, but

but many times they deſcend into deep Vallies, and loſe the ſight of it; or Fogs and Vapours ariſe, and thicken the Air, and they walk in doubted and uncertain Paths.

I mean plainly this, the beſt Men have their ſurprizes and times of Oſcitany, wherein they let fall their Watch, they carry Fleſh about them, which not only cauſeth them to omit ſome good, but betrays them often into many Sins; and when they have reviewed the actions of the beſt day, yet many things, even ſeven Sins, ſaith *Solomon*, will be to be repented of, and ſo many errors will appear in the moſt exact courſe of Living here, as may well cauſe the exacteſt Man to reſume the Pſalmiſts Prayer, *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, O Lord, for in thy ſight ſhall no Man living be juſtified.*

Now when a Man comes ſeriouſly to reflect upon theſe, and to unravel the whole Courſe of his Life, and to obſerve what great and many deformities he may diſcover, when he looks upon himſelf in the Glaſs of the Divine Law, it is no wonder if his good thoughts change, but the wonder rather will be, that his Faith is able to bear up againſt ſuch cauſes of doubting, and his Anchor of Hope able to pitch upon any firmneſs in ſuch a falſe and muddy ground.

To which, if we add theſe two things more, that God may many times let theſe thoughts looſe upon Men, to correct their paſt errors,

and

and puniſh them for their late miſcarriages, and make them more watchful and careful for the time to come. And likewiſe that many Good Men are of very ſoft and tender Spirits, and naturally apt to be timorous and ſcrupulous, and ſo may really miſtake their own ſtate, and too much indulge the ill abodings of their own minds.

I ſay, if we lay all theſe together, we ſhall not be at a loſs for reaſons of this thing, nor be forced to reſolve the cauſes of it into Temptations and Spiritual deſertions, as ſome are apt to doe, but ſoon diſcover that this is even unavoidable, while Men Travel in this Wilderneſs.

But whether we miſtake in aſſigning the cauſes of this or not, it is certain this is the condition of the beſt Men, ſometimes their Faith fails them, and their Hopes are weak, and they are apt to call every thing into Queſtion; they grow jealous of Gods reſpects, and think their beloved withdraws his favour, and looks with a frowning Eye upon them.

Of this you may ſee the Pſalmiſt a plain Inſtance, *Pſ.* 30. 6, 7. he that is now warbling forth his joyful ſenſe of Divine Favour and Love to him, and in a ſenſe of it triumphing as if he could never be moved, is in the very next verſes complaining of Gods hiding his Face, and his Mourning under Fears of his diſpleaſure.

How

How highly muſt it then concern us all, and how much muſt this great Joy and comfort of Lives depend upon it, to be as frequent in this Service, wherein we refreſh our Faith and Hope, and feed upon the viſible Pledges of our dear Lords Love, and are as ſenſibly aſſured of his mighty kindneſs towards us, as if we had ſeen him Bleeding upon the Croſs for us, with his Arms expanded, ready to embrace us, and his bleſſed Head hanging down in languiſhments of Love to us.

Theſe conſolations are better known by ſenſe and happy Experiences than deſcribed by words; all Good Men can tell great Stories of them, and in ſo doing recount ſo many great Arguments and Obligations (if they be wiſe for their own good) for often Eating this Bread, *&c.*

SECT. 5.

3. THe third thing in which this Union with Chriſt doth conſiſt and which I am to improve nto an Argument for our often Eating this Bread, *&c.* is the being acted by the Spirit of Chriſt, and partaking in the bleſſed influences of the ſame.

Upon which Account I told you this is called a being made to drink into the ſame Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. and is certainly the moſt firm and viſible Pledge that God now gives Men,

of

of their being animated by that Holy Spirit (as the Learned *Hammond* ſpeaks) and partaking in the Powerful Communications of it.

And this receives confirmation from Chriſts own expreſs promiſe, *Joh.* 4. 14. *Whoſoever Drinketh of the Water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt*, And Chap. 6. 50, 57, 58. *He that Eateth this Bread ſhall not die. He that Eateth me, even he ſhall live by me.* And again, *He that Eateth this Bread ſhall live for ever.* —— The plain meaning of which (applied to the Sacramental Eating) is this: This is the Spiritual Food, living Nouriſhment, in which the Spirit of Chriſt is conveyed and imparted to Men, which ſhall be a continual Spring of Life, and vigour, and ſtrength to Good Men, which ſhall ever be ready and ſufficient for them, to all the purpoſes of Holineſs and Duty.

And this yet is more clear, if any thing can make it ſo, from what the Apoſtle ſaith anſwerable to this, that we are (by this means of Union) Members of his Body, of his Fleſh, and of his Bone, *Eph.* 5. 30. and if ſo, muſt needs be acted and animated by the ſame Spirit, which moſt certainly informs and influenceth, enliveneth and moveth every Member of this Myſtical Body, as truly as the Soul of Man doth every Member in the Natural one.

But I have made out the Truth of this Notion before, and need not now repeat what

what was ſaid on it. My preſent buſineſs is to improve this into an Argument, for our frequent Eating this Bread, and often Drinking this Cup, which is the great thing I am preſſing all along this Diſcourſe.

And certainly a little conſideration would ſuperſede all need of Art in this particular. If this be the great Miniſtration of the Spirit, and the moſt viſible pledge and aſſurance of it, Men that conſider what the advantages of having this Spirit, and to what excellent purpoſes it is granted to Good Men, need not be told what an Argument and Encouragement this is, to be as frequent in this Miniſtration of it, as poſſibly may be.

But I ſhall not venture this Argument only to Mens own conſideration, but become their further remembrancer, and aſſiſt them in thoſe Collections, which yet they might be able to make themſelves, if they pleaſed.

There are four Conſiderations (among many more that might be named) that will be ſufficient to give this Argument its due force.

1. How abſolutely neceſſary it is, that we have the Aids and Supplies of this Spirit.

2. How great and valuable the Advantages of having it are.

3. How our needs of it will always continue, or rather multiply and encreaſe upon our hands.

4. What

4. What continual danger and hazard we are in, of loſing and forfeiting the preſence and aſſiſtances of the ſame.

1. I deſire it may be conſidered how greatly neceſſary it is to have the Supplies and Communications of this Spirit: Even ſo neceſſary that the Apoſtle declares plainly, that if any Man have not the Spirit of Chriſt he is none of his, *Rom.* 8. 9. *i. e.* he is neither a True Member, nor a True Diſciple of Chriſt: Or (as others plainly interpret it) he is no Chriſtian.

There are two things that doe ſo neceſſarily depend upon the Spirit, that they are impoſſible without it; *viz.* Life and Motion. All the World is agreed upon this, and Experience confirms it daily, the Body ſeparated from the Spirit, how curious ſoever its Compoſition and Structure is, yet lies as a dead lump and Carcaſs, without any more Life or Motion, than a Stone, or clod of Earth.

And it is no leſs true of the New Man, than the Natural; there muſt another Spirit be put into us, otherwiſe we ſhall neither be able to live the Life of God, nor to move in that Sphere of Duty, that he hath placed us in.

This Scheme of ſpeaking you ſhall find conſtantly retained in the New Teſtament, and this Truth repreſented under Analogies, and Reſemblances to the Natural State of Man.

Thus

Thus Wicked Men are ſaid to be dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins, and when they are converted, to be born again, and born of the Spirit, as our Saviour phraſeth it: That is, to receive a Principle of New Life from the Spirit, and Influences and Power to act, and behave themſelves like Good Men from the ſame Spirit.

The plain meaning of which Metaphorical alluſions is this, that the Communications of Chriſts Spirit, are as neceſſary to the being, and exerciſe of Holineſs, as the Rational Soul is neceſſary to the Life, and Motion of a Man.

And in ſome places this is plainly ſpoken, and without any Figure; thus, *Joh.* 15. 5. *Without me ye can doe nothing.* Or, as the Margin reads it, *ſevered from me ye can doe nothing.* Which he illuſtrates by an obvious plain ſimilitude, taken from the Vine, and the Branches; for as theſe live, and bring forth fruit, only by being united to the Vine, and by partaking of that Vital Sap and Juice, which the Vegetative Spirit conveys to them; but are fruitleſs, and preſently wither and die, when cut off from it, and when thoſe Communications are intercepted: So Good Men live and produce the fruits of Grace and Vertue, only by being united to Chriſt, and receiving the Communications and Influences of his Bleſſed Spirit.

And St. *Paul* ſpeaks the ſame thing, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. *Not that we are ſufficient of our ſelves, as*

of

as of our ſelves, but our ſufficiency is of God; he ſpeaks it there with reſpect to ability to do the work of an Apoſtle, and to thoſe extraordinary gifts, that were then beſtowed to that End. But it is as true alſo, of Power and Sufficiency to live like good Men, and exerciſe Grace, which is therefore, *Gal.* 5. 22. aſcribed to the Spirit, and the ſeveral inſtances of it, called Fruits of the Spirit; becauſe this is the great principle of Sanctification and Holineſs, and that whoſe aids and aſſiſtances Chriſt hath purchaſed for good Men.

There are ſome diſputes and differences in the Chriſtian World about the Operations of this Spirit, and his manner of working upon the hearts of Men, but ſince the Pelagian Hereſie hath been exploded, there are none that I know of about the thing, but all Parties grant the aids and aſſiſtances of the Spirit to back all good Men, and to carry them through all difficulties, that the way of Duty is encumbred with, to be abſolutely needful.

Now if this Service be the Miniſtration of this Spirit, and if all that rightly partake in it be made to drink into the ſame, which is ſo abſolutely neceſſary to all the Ends of Converſion and Holineſs: Then certainly, it cannot be leſs than greatly needful, that we often partake in it; in which we have theſe ſenſible aſſurances hereof given to us.

2. Eſpecially if Secondly, we conſider

how mightily valuable and great the advantage of having this Spirit are.

There are diverſities of Gifts (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1. *Cor.* 12. 4.) but the ſame Spirit, and different Adminiſtrations, and Operations, but the ſame Spirit worketh in all.

It is as true of the common Graces, as the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, and there are as many advantages relating to one as to the other; and therefore there are ſo many names given to this Spirit, in the New Teſtament, to intimate what bleſſed Effects iſſue from it. I cannot give account of them all; but ſhall give a ſpecimen of this, by inſiſting on ſome few.

1. The Spirit of Grace and Holineſs, becauſe it is (as I ſaid before) the great principle of Sanctification, and that which refineth and purgeth the Soul of Man from the filthineſs of Sin and Luſt.

2. The Spirit of Strength and Power, that bears down the Oppoſition of the Fleſh, and enables good Men to baffle all the Temptations, and to ſurmount all the Difficulties that they find in the way of Holineſs. Upon this account good Men are ſaid to be Victorious in Duty, and to overcome the World, becauſe ſtronger is that Spirit that is in them, than that in the World, 1 *Joh.* 4.4.

3. The Spirit of Truth, who was to lead the Apoſtles into all Truth, that is, the Knowledg of all thoſe things that were needful to be

be taught and made known to the World. St. *John* calls this influence of the Spirit, the holy anointing from God, which inſtructs good Men in the Truth, and preſerveth them from Errour, 1 *Joh.* 2. 27.

4. The Spirit of Conſolation, or the Comforter, as our Saviour moſt commonly calls it in the Goſpel of St. *John*, which is to cheer the hearts of good Men, ſweeten their Lives, and enable them to bear up againſt all the Afflictions and Troubles of this Life.

How, or in what manner, the Spirit effecteth theſe things in Man, is not needful curiouſly to enquire, and perhaps after all the diſputes of Men, will remain a Secret; and our Saviour intimates ſo much in that known place, *Joh.* 3. 8. where he compares it to the Wind, and the Operations of it, which is yet a Secret to the moſt inquiſitive of Mankind, and which we do not certainly know after all our ſcrutiny, whence it cometh or whither it goeth.

But all theſe things the Scripture declareth to be wrought by the Spirit, beſides many other; and it is enough to content us that they are effected, though we do not know perhaps how they are ſo.

Now let me beg you to conſider, how great the advantages of having this Spirit muſt needs be, were there but only theſe Effects of it, that I have mention'd.

If we have the Spirit of Grace and Power,

to ſanctifie our Natures, and enable us to live like good Men, to carry us through all the Temptations of the World, the Fleſh and the Devil, to vanquiſh all the Powers of Darkneſs that are ſet in our way to Heaven, and enableus to perſevere and hold out unto the End.

If we have the Spirit of Truth, to keep us ſtedfaſt and unmovable, againſt all the ſtorms and ſhocks of Errour, and preſerve us againſt all the Serpentine Inſinuations of falſhood and hereſie, which are ſo common in this Age.

And if we have the Spirit of Conſolation, to ſweeten all the adverſe accidents and ſufferings of this Life, and to carry us with Joy and Comfort to our great Port.

I ſay, If we have all theſe things, what want we yet? What can we deſire beyond them? How happy and bleſſed are they that injoy and feel theſe things? And how happy ſhall we be if we have them? And therefore I leave it to conſideration, whether we ſhould undervalue, and lightly eſteem that which is the Miniſtration and Conveyance of all theſe: Or whether it becomes us by neglecting this Service, to ſhew a diſreſpect unto, and to deprive our ſelves of thoſe things which we pretend ſo mightily to eſteem, and which indeed are ſo greatly Beneficial to us.

3. Eſpecially if to this we add in the third place, That our needs of this Spirit will always continue, or rather multiply upon our hands.

To

To receive the Spirit of God all at once, and not by meaſure, as the expreſſion is, *Joh.* 3. 34. was the Priviledge only of our great Lord; but with us it is not ſo: We do not jump immediately into perfection, and when we have once taſted of the Spirit have no need of more; but we have need of a conſtant ſupply of the Spirit, as the Apoſtles phraſe is, *Phil.* 1. 19.

For as it is with the ſupports and ſupplies of our Natural Life, that which is ſufficient to one ſtate of Life is not ſo to another, nor do Men eat enough at one time, to ſerve to ſupport them all their whole Life after: So it is with good Men, and their Spiritual condition.

They do not commence perfect Men in Chriſt all on a ſudden, but juſt after the meaſures, and proportions of their attaining to the full ſtate of Men, in the courſe of Nature.

When they are Babes in Chriſt, the Milk of the Spirit, and lower meaſures of it may ſuffice them; but as they are to grow from ſtrength to ſtrength, and to make advances in their Spiritual ſtate, ſo they need ſtronger meat and larger portions, and their neceſſities are increaſed, in proportion to their Temptations, and to the Duties incumbent on them.

In a word, and to be plain, it is certain, the Spiritual ſtate of Man wants daily Food, and conſtant ſupports as well as his natural, and the new Man can no more ſubſiſt with-

put constant communications from the Spirit of God, than the old Man can without continual supplies of Nourishment.

Good Men are to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as it is said, 2. *Pet.*. 3. *ult.* and to proceed from strength to strength, till they be fit to appear before God in *Zion*, *Ps.* 84. 7. and therefore must have the righteousness of God, and the Influences of the Spirit revealed from faith to faith, and in proportions answerable to those higher measures of Grace, that they are to attain unto.

And therefore as Men have their daily Bread, and seldom want their daily repasts, so they should take as much care that their Souls have their daily Food, and that they eat of that Bread which came down from Heaven, the Symbols of which are eaten in the Holy Sacrament, and the Souls of all those that duly partake of them, as really refreshed and nourished by the Spirit convey'd in them, as their Bodies are by the Bread and Wine.

The same reasons that hold for the necessity of the one, will equally conclude for the other; and the same prudence that prompts Men to seek constant supplies for their Bodies, should engage them to do the same for their Souls, and the good of them; unless they think them not worthy of a regard and care considerable to the other.

4. To all which we may add a fourth conſideration to improve our Argument, and that is, to call to mind what continual danger we are in of forfeiting the preſence and aſſiſtances of this Spirit.

No Man needs be told how often he remits his Induſtry and Care, and gives way to the entertainments and dalliances of ſenſe and ſin: His own mind will tell him, if he will but hearken to it; and if he will but impartially ſurvey the paſſages of the beſt day he ſpends, he will find too many inſtances of both theſe. By the one of which he diſcourageth and grieveth the Holy Spirit of God, and by the other provokes him to withdraw his good Influences from him.

The Holy Spirit of God is given to us to be a Principle of good Life, to ſet us above the Vanities and Follies of the Fleſh, and to wean us from them; and therefore when we indulge to theſe, and ſuffer our ſelves to be charmed by their Inſinuations, we remonſtrate to the Spirit, and quench the Flame and Vigour of it, and receive this Grace of God in vain; we then pollute his Temple, and ſet up an abomination in the holy place; we drive away the holy Dove by the noiſom ſtenches of Sin, and cauſe him to loath the place of his uſual reſidence; we drive away the Divine ſchechinal, and convert the holy place into a Den of unclean Thieves.

Again Gods Holy Spirit is given to aſſiſt

our weakneſs, and help our Infirmities, and to ſupply the deficiences of our own Endeavours; and the condition upon which he is promiſed is our own Induſtry and Faithfulneſs, and employing our common ſtock to the moſt advantage we can.

This our Saviour hath taught us by the parable of the Talents, and explained the ſignification of it to be plainly this, that the further Influences of the Spirit depend upon our honeſt emproving of the preſent, and that he only that is faithful in a little, ſhall be entruſted with more, as may be ſeen *Mat.* 25. from 14. to 31.

But now when we indulge to our Oſcitancy Idleneſs, remit our own care and induſtry in ſtriving againſt Sin, and reſiſting all Temptations to it, as (God knows) the beſt Man living too often doth, then we diſcourage the Holy Spirit, we damp the Influences thereof, and provoke him to neglect thoſe who will neglect themſelves, and not to aſſiſt thoſe who will not be true to his Divine aids.

The more need then certainly there muſt be, and the more highly it muſt concern us, to be conſtant in that holy Service and Feaſt, which we ſhall find both Meat and Medicine for our Souls, by which we may either greatly prevent, or quickly repair both theſe Evils, and ſecure to our ſelves the happy preſence of this good Spirit, under whoſe Wing and Conduct we ſhall both be ſafe, and happy too,

too, guardied againſt all the ambuſhments and aſſaults of the Devil, ſecure againſt all the allurements and inticements of the World and the Fleſh, ſtrengthened with all power and might in the inner Man, enabled to run the ways of Gods commandments, have our path of Duty made plain and eaſie, and our Souls filled with that Joy in believing, that Peace and Comfort of mind, that will ſet us above the ſtorms and troubles of this life, carry us joyful through them all, and at laſt expire into the unconceivable Joy and bleſs of Angels, and Bleſſed Souls in Heaven. To which God Almighty bring us in his due time for Jeſus ſake. Amen.

CHAP. XII.

Divided into ſeven Sections. In the Firſt the laſt End of this is propoſed, viz. *the cloſe Union of Chriſtians one to another. In the Second, How this Service is Effective of it. In the Third the Argument is improved by ſhewing the grand concernment of this to all Chriſtians, by Scripture. In the Fourth ſome further conſiderations to ſhew the Great Importance*

tance of this. And the first of these insisted on, viz. *the consideration of them as a Church. In the Fifth the second consideration proposed, their Obligation to act according to the Principles of Christian Religion. In the Sixth the third and last consideration for the concernment of Christian Love and Charity proposed,* viz. *the Credit or Reproach of Christian Religion among others. In the Seventh these three Reasons are considered again with a particular respect to us, and our Circumstances at this day. The Conclusion, Recapitulating the whole discourse, and pressing the serious complyance with the purpose of it.*

5. AND now I proceed to the fifth and last End of this Service, and that is, to be a Means and Symbol of our close Union one to another. Which will become another good Argument for the frequency of this Service. In speaking to which I shall observe the same method that I did in the former.

1. Explain this Notion, and shew you, how, and in what respects the Holy Sacrament is effective of Love and Charity among Men.

2. Improve it to our present purpose, and shew

ſhew what an Obligation and Argument this is to often eating this Bread, and drinking this Cup.

1. For the Explication I ſhall need only to ſhew you, that by Union here I mean nothing but true Love and Affection among Chriſtians. This is the trueſt and ſtrongeſt Union, a Union of Hearts, a Combination of ſtrong and cordial Affections.

We commonly ſay of true Lovers, they have but one Soul, and are as really united by that one Soul, as the Members of the Body are, that are animated and acted by one Spirit, really united each to other though they do not touch immediately, but may have diſtant Sites in the Body.

Chriſtians may be properly enough ſaid to be united, by other bands and ligatures, and in the ſame ſenſe that Members of a Society are ſaid to be incorporated, and Brethren and near Relations may be ſaid to be united in the ſame Blood, and Members of a Family, and Servants to the ſame Maſter may be ſaid to be joyned in the ſame Family and Service.

They have one and the ſame Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm, the ſame God and Father, the ſame Mother, the ſame Hope, the ſame Inheritance. They worſhip the ſame God, profeſs the ſame Faith, receive the ſame Baptiſm, the ſame God is their Father, the ſame Church

Church their Mother, the ſame Chriſt their elder Brother, they have the ſame glorious Hope, and expect to ſhare in the ſame Inheritance; and which is more, the ſame Spirit worketh all in all.

So that every thing in Chriſtianity ſpeaks Union, and is contrived, not only to be Argument, but Advantage and Help to it. But the great Complement of all is a real Love and Charity one to another, ſutable to theſe near Relations that are between them, *i. e.* when they not only are, but (as St. *Peter* ſpeaks) love as Brethren.

For we ſadly ſee that all the other bands without this cannot hold them from breaking out into Schiſms, and ſcandalous Separations from one another. For the Diviſions of *Reuben* there were of Old, and now more juſtly than ever may be great ſearchings of Heart.

We may ſee Men, whom neither Natural nor Spiritual Conſanguinity can keep together, but Brother riſes up againſt, and ſeparates from Brother, and thoſe whom Religion hath connected in the cloſeſt Relations, are ready to ſheath the Sword in one anothers Bowels. And perhaps there are not more bitter Envyings, more uncharitable Railings, and fiercer conteſts in all the World, than among them whoſe Relation and Profeſſion enjoins the greateſt Peace and Charity one to another.

For

For this reaſon the great precept of the Goſpel is Love, and its great End was to perfect whatever was defective in the rules and meaſures of Charity in former Diſpenſations. *A new Commandment*, ſaith our Saviour, *I give unto you, that ye love one another*, Joh. 13. 31. and v. 32. *By this ſhall all Men know that you are my Diſciples, if you love one another.* For this is the Badge and Signature of Chriſtianity.

And it is certain the Apoſtles ſo underſtood it, and accordingly recommended it under more earneſt and paſſionate Arguments than any one Grace beſides. And St. *Hierome* tells us, when St. *John* was asked why he ſo frequently urged that Exhortation, *Little Children love one another*, he anſwered, becauſe this was the great Commandement of Chriſt, and if Men did this truly, they would do every thing elſe.

But I ſhall divert too far from my purpoſe. This is that Union among Chriſtians, that I urge the practice of this Service upon, *viz.* a real, fervent Love and Charity one to another.

SECT. 2.

2. NOw what Influence it hath upon this, is the ſecond thing propoſed to ſhew to you. And that I ſhall do in theſe three particulars.

1. It is a plain Symbol of it.

2. It

2. It is a good Argument and Engagement to it.

3. It is directly Effective of the ſame.

It is a very plain and evident Sign and Symbol of Love among Chriſtians; and that in many reſpects.

1. For Firſt, It is a Feaſt; and here Chriſtians eat and drink together in token of that Peace and Love that is between them.

It is certain eating and feaſting together, at the ſame Table, anciently was, and yet is a token of Love and Friendſhip. And one great End of Feaſts among Fraternities, and Guilds of Men (a practice very common in this City) is to promote Love and Friendſhip among them.

Upon this Account you ſhall find that phraſe of eating Bread to denote Peace and Kindneſs, and friendly Intercourſe between Men. When *David* would expreſs the Treachery of his Friend, he ſaith, *He that eat of my Bread lift up his Heel againſt me*, *Pſ.* 41. 9. And the Strangeneſs or Enmity between the *Egyptians* and the *Hebrews*, is expreſſed by their not enduring to eat Bread together, *Gen.* 43. 32.

For this Reaſon alſo Salt, that is a conſtant Appendix to eating, being always accounted a neceſſary Condiment of all Meats, was ſtill eſteemed and looked upon as a Symbol of Friendſhip, among the Jews, and all Nations; and there is one place in Scripture, that

that expreſſeth the ſame, *i. e. Ezra.* 4. 14. *Becauſe we have Maintenance from the Kings Palace, it is not meet for us to ſee the Kings diſhonour.* But the Chaldee (as a Learned Man obſerves) reads it, *Becauſe we have eaten of the Kings Salt, i. e.* we are engaged in a Covenant of Friendſhip with him, and therefore it is not becoming us to ſuffer any diſhonour to be done to him.

And it is well known that ἅλας καὶ τράπεζαν παραβαίνειν, to violate Salt and the Table, was a common phraſe to ſignifie the Breach of Friendſhip, And that Superſtitious Cuſtom among our ſelves at this day, to count the overturning of the Salt upon the Table Ominous, and betiding anger to him that it falls towards, is founded upon this Opinion, becauſe Salt was anciently eſteemed a Symbol of Love and Friendſhip.

2. This is not only a Feaſt, but a Feaſt purely of Love, and ſo the Paſſover was always eſteemed, not only a Feaſt to remember Gods Love to them in the Egyptian Deliverance, but to promote Love alſo among themſelves.

For this cauſe they were all to come together to keep it in one place. For this cauſe alſo the Lamb that they were to eat, was to be whole and unbroken. And upon this account likewiſe it was to be eaten with unleavened Bread.

To which it is plain the Apoſtle alludes 1 *Cor.* 5. 7, 8. *Chriſt*

5. 7, 8. *Christ our Passover is Sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the Feast, not with the Leaven of Malice and Wickedness, but with the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth.*

Whatever these things signified to them, it is most certain the Holy Sacrament is to us a Feast of Love, we feed on Love, and the Symbols of the greatest Love that was ever shewed to Men. We confederate with our God, and we engage in Love and Respect to our Brethren; we are invited only to come upon the condition of our being in Love and Charity with our Brethren, and we testifie the same by feeding lovingly with them at the same Table.

And it is well known that the Primitve Christians were upon this Account said to be ἡ καρδία, καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ μία, of one Heart, and of one Soul, *Acts* 4. 32. and to continue in κοινονία, in Communion and Fellowship, and Breaking of Bread, *Acts* 1. 42.

And not only so, but that their Communions were attended with such Rites and Symbols, as were on purpose to denote Love and Charity. I shall mention three or four which Learned Men give account of.

First, The Holy Kiss, of which you have mention *Rom.* 16. 16. and in other places. This always attended this Holy Feast, upon the account of which perhaps the Heathen raised that scandulous Report against them; and the Gnosticks it is most certain did pervert and abuse to the worst purposes. Which were

were perhaps the reaſons that it came ſo ſoon to be diſuſed and laid aſide in the Church.

2. The ἀγάπη, as they called the Love-Feaſt, which for a long time together cloſed always this Holy Service, and of which there is mention, 2 *Pet.* 2. 13. and *Jude* v. 14. in which becauſe in proceſs of time there came to be ſome irregularities, they were diſuſed alſo, and changed into

3. Collections for the Poor, which continue to this day, as a Symbol of that Love and Charity that we have to them, our Compaſſion of their Wants, and our Charity to relieve them; juſt as in Feaſts of old among the Jews, not the *Convivæ* only were entertained, but ſome Portions alſo were ſent unto abſent Friends, to teſtifie Reſpect and Love to them.

4. And in ſome places (as Learned Men obſerve) one Church uſed to ſend a Loaf to another, as a token of their Conſent in Faith and Affection too. And it was commonly conſecrated by the Church that received it, and uſed at the Miniſtration of the Sacrament, to teſtifie their Reciprocal Affection to them that ſent it.

By all which things was clearly ſignified what a cloſe Union of Hearts and Affection there ought to be among Chriſtians, that communicate together in this Holy Service.

2. It is Argument and Obligation to it. The truth is Chriſtian Religion in it ſelf, is

this, and it is ſo contrived that every Branch and Service of it is ſo too.

But perhaps this more eſpecially, and above ſome others, upon theſe three Accounts among many others.

1. As in this Service we make particular ſhew and profeſſion of Love and Kindneſs one to another, all our Actions all along the whole Service are Symbolical, and Significant of Love.

We come into the Houſe of God as Friends, we feaſt together as Friends, we communicate in the ſame Cup, and eat of the one Bread, to teſtifie our being united and confederated together, we call upon the ſame Lord in the ſame words, and we acknowledg our ſelves Brethren to the ſame Jeſus.

And as by all theſe we make ſhew of, ſo we declare and profeſs this Kindneſs and Love, and therefore are obliged greatly to the ſame; elſe we are Plagiaries and Hypocrites, and our own Profeſſion ſhall be our Condemnation.

2. This we know is one great Condition of our being admitted into this Service, and we accept it and ſubmit to it.

The Exhortations of our Church previous to this Service tell us this plainly: If any of you ſhall perceive his Offences not only to be againſt God, but alſo againſt your Neighbour, then you ſhall endeavour preſently to reconcile

reconcile your ſelves to him, that he may be no more angry with you, than you with him.

And again, We are exhorted to amend our Lives, and be in perfect Charity with all Men, ſo ſhall we be meet partakers of thoſe Holy Myſteries.

And when we are immediately called to the Holy Table, we are ſummoned in theſe words, *Ye that do truly and earneſtly repent you of your Sins and are in Love and Charity with your Neighbours.*

And we are caution'd by the fearful Example of *Judas*, that we do not come with any Enmity and Malice, and evil will or deſign againſt any Man, as he had againſt Chriſt, leſt the Devil enter into us, as he did into him after the Sop, and fill us full of all Iniquity, and bring us to deſtruction both of Soul and Body.

So that the Church deals plainly and fairly with us, and tells us upon what conditions we may acceptably come. The Miniſter hath Power to forbid any to come that live in open hatred and malice againſt others, and he is commanded to inſtruct all, that Love and Charity is abſolutely neceſſary for all Communicants, and that without it, they cannot acceptably come to the Table of the Lord.

Now this we all know, and we accept this Condition, and we offer our ſelves as perſons

ſo qualified when we come, and therefore are under Obligation to be really ſuch as we profeſs our ſelves to be.

3. Nay Thirdly, we expreſly ſtipulate and engage our ſelves to Love and Charity hereby, for by this we ſtrike Covenant, and confederate together, as I ſhewed before.

For this Sacrament is not only a Rite of confederating with God, but with one another alſo. We covenant to forget all our former Animoſities, to forgive the injuries we have received, and to depoſite the grudges we have had againſt any, and for the future to love them as Brethren, and live in perfect Peace and Charity with them.

And therefore muſt needs acknowledg our ſelves to lye under very great Obligations to do ſo, ſince if we fail, we are falſe and perjured, and violate that Covenant that we ſolemnly ſtruck, in the preſence of God and of his Holy Angels.

3. But Thirdly, I add, that the Holy Sacrament is directly Effective of Love and Charity among Chriſtians. It is not only a Symbol of it, and an Argument and Obligation to it, but it tends directly to the producing of the ſame.

And this I ſhall ſhew it doth, not only as a ſolemn Act of Worſhip, by which we conciliate the Love and Favour of God to us, nor only as it is an Inſtrument or Rite of Prayer, by which we obtain his Grace, nor only as it

it is the Miniſtration of the Spirit, and its aſſiſtances, by which we are enabled to this and every other thing that is good, though theſe things be very conſiderable Inſtances of its Efficacy to this purpoſe.

But I ſhall repreſent it in theſe two further particulars.

1. It worketh the Love of God and Chriſt in us.

2. It directly influenceth our Love and Charity to Men.

1. It tends mightily to the working in us a great Love to God and Chriſt, and can ſcarce fail of that effect in any that conſider what they do, and what the End of this Service is.

It is to ſhew forth the Lords Death till he come, and is a ſolemn, grateful commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Death of Chriſt, and of the great Benefits that we receive thereby, as our Church ſpeaks.

It is a calling to our minds, and impregnating our thoughts with the aſtoniſhing and ſurprizing Love of God in ſending his Son into the World, and of the amazing kindneſs of Chriſt in ſuffering and dying for us.

A Meditation which can hardly miſs of making us all wonder and all Love: A thing which rent the Temple, and the ſtony rock of Old, and muſt break our hearts into tenderneſs and tears, unleſs they be harder than they.

Good Men can tell you from their own Experiences, what the Power and Efficacy of this is to this purpoſe. Though they be always ἔνθεοι, as the Greeks ſpeak, poſſeſſed and acted by the Love of God, yet they never feel their hearts more ſenſibly touched, nor this fire burning hotter in them, than when they behold the Symbols of his great Love, ſee him evidently crucified before them, and feed on the viſible pledges and repreſentations of his Body and Blood.

Now this Love of Chriſt is naturally Effective of Love to Men: When our hearts are ſo full of this Divine Affection, it will burſt out, and ſome of it will overflow, and fall down upon our Brethren. If we ſo love him whom we have not ſeen, and behold but in figure and ſhadow, we ſhall naturally love his Members whom we do ſee, and have the ſame reſpect for his Members, and thoſe that bear on them his Impreſs and Image, with whom we converſe daily, and (as St. *John* ſpeaks) if we love God we ſhall love our Brother alſo.

2. Yea Secondly, This naturally influenceth our Love and Charity to Men upon many accounts, which I but juſt name.

It is the Miniſtration of the Spirit (as I have ſhewed you before) which naturally melts down the ruggedneſs of Mens Nature, and inclines them to Love and Peace, which is the eſpecial Effect and Fruit of it.

It ſets the great Arguments of our Religion home, and cauſeth them to lye cloſer upon our Thoughts, and ſeldom fails of having ſome Effects on the worſt Men. You ſhall hardly ever ſee a man ſo wicked, but will reſtrain himſelf, that day he receives the Sacrament. Now among all the Duties of Chriſtian Religion, Charity is one of the greateſt, and it engageth Men to be peaceable as well as pure.

It is the ſtrongeſt Engagement to Love and Charity, and above all other Inſtruments in Chriſtian Religion to preſs us to it; it not only repreſents to us the Love of our Saviour, and the Bleſſed Effects and Benefits of it, but it calls upon us to imitate it, and gives us no reaſon to expect thoſe Benefits but upon doing ſo. For our Loving and Pardoning others is made the condition of our being pardoned our ſelves.

And Laſtly, There is ſome ſecret, unknown vertue in it, that ſtrangely ſoftens our Tempers, and ſweetens our Natures, and ſtrongly diſpoſeth us to the Love of all Men, eſpecially all that we ſee feed on our Saviour with us, and have the ſame honourable thoughts and eſteem for him that we have, and are ſo cloſely confederated with us in the Worſhip of him, and in the Expectation of the ſame Bleſſings from him.

Theſe things are better felt than expreſſed, and better known by Experiences, than faint

Diſcourſes. All good Men feel them, and know theſe things that I ſay to be ſober truths.

Juſt as *Moſes* his Face did ſhine, after his ſo intimate converſation with God in the Mount, ſo it is with good Men in this Service, their hearts are fired with the Love of God and Chriſt, the Holy Spirit takes ſtrong ſeizures of them, and this kindles a love and reſpect to Men, and unites hearts into one frame, even as the particles of the Bread they eat are united into one Maſs. They drink of the ſame Cup, and the ſame Spirit dwells in them, and makes them as one heart, and one ſoul.

SECT. 3.

3. AND now I proceed to emprove this Argument to the purpoſe of frequent communicating, and ſee what ſtrength there is in it to engage us often to eat this Bread, and drink this Cup.

And that I ſhall do in the Improvement of this Propoſition. There is no one thing more greatly concerning Chriſtians, nor more univerſally conducing to all the great purpoſes of Chriſtianity, than Love and Charity, and a cloſe Union among them; and therefore whatſoever it is, that is directly Effective of this, is mighty worthy of their continual reſpects

ſpects and regard. And this Holy Sacrament being ſo eminently the one, may reaſonably expect and challenge the other from us.

This Argument I ſhall endeavour to emprove, 1. By conſidering how proper it is at any time, upon its own reaſons. 2. By conſidering how very proper it is, and how affecting it ought to be upon us eſpecially at this time.

1. It is an Argument that is very proper at any time, and ought upon its own reaſons always to be effective with Chriſtians. For there is no one thing that they are more concerned to be careful of, than Love and Unity among themſelves, nor can any thing be more worthy of their greateſt regards, than that which tends to the conſervation and increaſe of it among them.

And the truth of this I ſhall endeavour to repreſent upon theſe two Accounts.

1. The many Exhortations to this, yea more than to any other thing whatſoever in the New Teſtament.

2. The great concernment of it to them above other things, both as a Church, and Society; as Chriſtians, and as they ſtand with reference unto others.

1. We may pretty well judge the Concernment of this, by the many reiterated Precepts and

and Injunctions of it, both by our Lord himſelf and by his Apoſtles, which we ſhall find to be both more frequent, more paſſionate and earneſt, and by more endearing and affecting Arguments than any one thing that we meet with.

Our Bleſſed Saviour himſelf recommended Peace and Mutual Love to his Diſciples, as his laſt great and dying requeſt to them, as you may ſee *Joh.* 15. 17. *Theſe things I command you, that ye love one another.* And *Cap.* 13. 34. he calls it his new and peculiar Precept, *A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.* As if this were that only thing which he of himſelf recommended to them. And the next words ſeem to import ſomething to that purpoſe; *By this ſhall all Men know that you are my Diſciples, if ye love one another.* As if this were the peculiar Badge and Signature of Chriſtianity, and that which above all other things it recommended to Men.

And he contents not himſelf to recommend it thus to them, and make it his laſt dying requeſt to them, but he puts it alſo into his laſt earneſt Prayer for them, *Joh.* 17. 21. *That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they all may be one, that the World may know that thou haſt ſent me.* As if this would be a reputation to himſelf, as well as to them, and an Argument of the Truth and Divinity of his Doctrine, as indeed it is, as perhaps you may hear more by and by.

And

And the Apoſtles of our Lord have troden exactly in his ſteps as to this, and recommended it with as much Paſſion and Earneſtneſs, as their great Maſter recommended it to them. I ſhall need but to inſtance in St. *John* and St. *Paul.*

The firſt of theſe was called the Beloved Diſciple, and having himſelf experimented the Bleſſed Effects of Divine Love, is ſo deſirous to kindle it in all others Breaſts, that he breaths nothing elſe almoſt in his firſt Epiſtle, but, *Little Children, love one another.* There is nothing he ſo earneſtly preſſeth, nothing that he recommends under more endearing Characters than Love. *Love is of God, and God is Love, and to Love is to have Communion and Fellowſhip with him, and to be transformed into his bleſſed likeneſs.* It is the only true Evidence of Religion and Goodneſs; and all pretences to theſe are vain, and a lye without it.

And St. *Hierome* tells us, that he was ſo conſtant in giving this Charge, that at laſt he was blamed and cenſured for it, and forced to make Apology for his doing of it.

How earneſt St. *Paul* was in this, may be clearly ſeen from ſeveral places in almoſt every of his Epiſtles.

In his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, Chap. 12. 15, 16. *Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep; Be of the ſame mind one towards another.* Chap. 15. 5. *Now the God of*

Patience

Patience and Conſolation, grant you to be like minded one towards another, according to Chriſt Jeſus.

In his Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, 1. *Cor.* 1.10. *Now I beſeech you, Brethren, by the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that you all ſpeak the ſame thing, and that there be no diviſions among you, but that ye be perfectly joyned together in the ſame mind, and in the ſame judgment.* And one great reaſon of his writing that Epiſtle (as the next verſe ſeems to intimate) was to compoſe and put a ſtop to thoſe Schiſms, that they were in danger of. As it was alſo of that to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, in which he ſo often recommends Love, Peace, Long-ſuffering, as the trueſt fruits and effects of a Divine Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22.

In his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, Chap. 1. to 7. *I therefore the Priſoner of the Lord beſeech you, that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith you are called, with all lowlineſs and meekneſs forbearing one another in Love:* Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace. And ſee what Arguments he further uſeth to this; *There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

In the Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, Ch. 2.1,2,3. *If therefore there be any conſolation in Chriſt, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowſhip of the Spirit,*

rit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the ſame Love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through ſtrife or vain-glory, but in lowlineſs of mind, let each eſteem other better than himſelf.

In the Epiſtle to the *Coloſſians* and *Theſſalonians* the like, *Col.* 3. 15. *Let the Peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which alſo ye are called in one body.* 1 *Theſ.* 5. 13. *Be at Peace among your ſelves.* Chap. 4. 9. *As touching Brotherly Love, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye your ſelves are taught of God to love one another*; and to know that this is abſolutely neceſſary upon the principles of Chriſtianity.

To theſe many other places might be added. In which I beg you to conſider, not only, that St. *Paul* recommends this, but with what zeal and earneſtneſs, and upon what great and affecting reaſons he doth ſo too. One while he conjures them by his own bonds, and another by the Love of God. One while chargeth them upon their Religion, and anon beſeeches them by the Love they bore to it. Here he lays before them all the great motives of Religion, and then begs and beſeeches them by the mercies of God, and as they have any bowels of Pity and Mercy to themſelves, to be of one mind, and one heart, and to be connected by the Unions of Love and Charity one to another.

And certainly all this ado, all this ſerioufneſs

neſs and condeſcenſion, all this wooing and begging, is not without ſome great reaſon, nor would be uſed, but that the matter is really great, and of the higheſt concernment unto Men. For the Spirit of God uſeth a *decorum* in things, and would never uſe this extraordinary pains and zeal, but in a very concerning, and extraordinary matter.

SECT. 4.

2. AND that this of Chriſtian Charity and Unity is ſo, I go on now to repreſent, upon the three reaſons I have already hinted.

1. The Firſt is the conſideration of them, as a Church or Society.

2. The Second is their Concernment to act and behave themſelves according to the Principles of their Religion.

3. The Third is the great Obligation that lyes on them not to give ſcandal and cauſe of Offence to others.

So that if Men have any regard and reſpect for the Church of Chriſt, any concern for Living up to their Religion, and any care for the honour and reputation of it before others, they muſt acknowledge Chriſtian Love and Charity, to be a thing of mighty great concernment to them.

1. For

1. For First, it is greatly necessary to the conservation and happiness of the Church of Christ, and they are impossible wthout it. Every Man knows this *in thesi*, and not only can, but is very apt to talk greatly to the purposes of it. And the truth is, any portion of Reason or Consideration, will enable him to do it.

For every Man knows that Societies, as well as Buildings, subsist by the firm Cohesion of their Members, and the strong Contignation of their parts. And that Maxim of our Saviour will be eternally true, that a Kingdom and a House divided against it self cannot stand.

And the Experience of all the World, and of all Ages of it confirms this Truth, Intestine Factions and Divisions in a Church or kingdom are the certain Presages of its Desolation, and as infallibly crush it into Ruine, as any Impressions of external Force or Violence can.

Nay perhaps more certainly, and it hath often been seen so; the Church hath withstood all external force and powers, and often become the stronger for it, but hath soon sunk under the weight of its own Divisions, and crumbled into nothing by its own Factions.

Now this gives a clear Instance of the necessity of Love and Unity among Christians; especially, if we add to it, how much they are concerned to consult the Conservation and Happiness of Christs Church.

And

And that Concernment ariſeth from many very conſiderable reaſons, which I would to God the Men of this Generati on would take into ſerious thought. I ſhall at preſent mention only three.

1. Their being members of this Church as they are Chriſtians. And therefore greatly concerned to conſult, and do all they can for the good of it, even as much as the Members in the Body natural, are to be ſolicitous for the health and good of it.

It is one mighty great and dangerous Error of theſe times, that Men look upon Church Communion and Memberſhip, only as an Arbitrary thing, and extrinſecal to their being Chriſtians, when as indeed, it is the ſame thing and of the ſame neceſſity. Men are not firſt Chriſtians, and afterwards become Members of Chriſts Church by ſome Conſequential and Arbitrary Conſent, or Act of theirs. But they become both theſe at the ſame time, and upon the ſame reaſons. Baptiſm which is the firſt great Rite of Proſelytiſm, the prime Badg and Signature of Chriſtianity, is the Rite alſo of admiſſion into Chriſts Church, and Communion of it, according to that ſaying of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. *By one ſpirit we are all baptized into one Body*; Not only into one Faith, but into one Body; *i.e.* the Church of Chriſt, which is familiarly called his Body in the New Teſtament.

For

For our Bleſſed Lord did not deſign only to make Chriſtians at large, but to incorporate and conſociate them into one Communion under ſuch Laws and Rules for the Government of them, in Obedience to which, a great part of their Chriſtianity conſiſts, as you ſhall hear more by and by.

And every Man upon the ſame reaſons that he becomes a Chriſtian, becomes a Member of Chriſts Church, and is only ſo far a Chriſtian as he is a Member of this Church and Body.

From whence it follows plainly, that the ſame reaſons that oblige a Chriſtian to any duty upon the account of his Religion do alſo as neceſſarily and ſtrongly oblige him to all thoſe duties that reſult from this his Relation to the Church: Which to be ſure in the firſt place are to do his utmoſt for the Conſervation and Proſperity of it, and never to do any thing by which the Peace and Order of it may be diſturbed.

For that would be as monſtrous a Guilt, and as abhorrent from the Laws of Chriſtianity, as it would be monſtrous, and a horrid Violation of the Laws of Nature, for the Hand, or other Member of the Body Natural, to tear off the Fleſh, and rip up the Bowels of it.

2. This Concernment for the good and Peace of the Church ariſeth from this other conſideration, that all the Bleſſings that we

expect from Chriſtian Religion, are expectable only upon our being Members of the Church, and in Communion with it. This is a great and mighty Conſideration, and worthy of our greateſt regard.

And that it is certainly true will appear ſufficiently from theſe two Conſiderations.

1. That the great things that Chriſt hath done and ſuffered for the Salvation of Mankind (the Effects of which are the great Bleſſings of Chriſtianity) are in Scripture ſaid to be done for them, not as ſingle Perſons, but as they are incorporated into a Church.

I ſhall mention a few places inſtead of many to this purpoſe; Thus, *Eph.* 5. 25. *Chriſt loved the Church, and gave himſelf for it.* *Acts* 20. 28. *Chriſt redeemed the Church with his own Blood.* And *Eph.* 5. 23. *He is the Saviour of the Body*; *i. e.* of the Church, as I ſhewed you that Word ſignifies.

From which it is very plain, that the great things which Chriſt hath done and ſuffered, were done and ſuffered for his Church, and that the reaſon upon which ſingle Individual Perſons reap the benefit of them, is upon the account of their being Members of the Church; juſt as a Charter is granted not to ſingle perſons, but to a Corporation, and all the Immunities and Priviledges granted by it, are enjoyable by ſingle Men, only as they are Members of that Corporation.

Upon which that Maxim ſo common among the Fathers, *Extra Eccleſiam non eſt ſalus* is founded, There is no Salvation out of the Church; and their commonly comparing the Church to the Ark of *Noah*, out of which all were drowned (as was ſaid formerly) doth rely upon the ſame reaſon too.

2. That the great and bleſſed Influences of the Holy Spirit of God (that we have formerly ſhewed to be ſo abſolutely neceſſary to the purpoſes of Holineſs and Salvation) are in Scripture alſo ſaid to be confined only to the Church, and to the Members of it.

And this naturally follows upon that ſo common a Notion in the New Teſtament of calling the Church the Body of Chriſt; for all Men know that the parts of the Body are animated and influenced by the Spirit, only while they continue Members of it, and united as ſuch: But theſe preſently expire and die for want of Communications from the Spirit, when they are cut off, and ſeparated from the Body. There muſt be a Union of the Parts and Members, in order to their being influenced by the ſame Spirit.

Now theſe two make up a material Conſideration indeed, and render our Concern for the Peace and Welfare of the Church, to be a concern for our own good. For both theſe are bound up in the ſame Meaſures; and therefore as we value the Influences of

Chriſts Spirit, and deſire to ſhare in the Effect of what he hath done and ſuffered for Mankind, we are obliged to keep in the Communion of the Church, and to conſult the Peace and Happineſs of the ſame.

3. This Concernment for the good of the Church ariſeth from a third Conſideration alſo, That the greateſt part of that duty that is required of them, concerns them in this reſpect only; *i. e.* in the Capacity of Perſons conſociated together in a Community, and united in the ſame Society.

There are but a few things that concern them in their ſingle Capacities, in Compariſon of thoſe that relate to them as Members of the Church. I ſhall only remit you to the Conſideration of two places of Scripture for this. The one is *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. where the Fruits of the Spirit are enumerated, and of them you will find the Conſocial ones (if I may ſo call them) ſuch as Love, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs and Meekneſs to be far the greateſt part. The other is 2 *Pet.* 1. 6, 7. where the moſt of the Links that integrate that Golden Chain of Graces, are Patience, and Brotherly Kindneſs, and Charity, *&c.* all which evidently concern Men as they ſtand related to others, and conjoyned in Society with them.

Which three things, if you will pleaſe now to unite them together, will give this firſt conſideration, upon which I have choſen to repre-

repreſent the great concernment of Chriſtian Love and Unity, its due and right.

Chriſtians are all, as they are Chriſtians, Members of Chriſts Church, and they are only in a Capacity of partaking the Effect and Benefit of the great things done for Mans Redemption, as they are Members of that Church; and moſt of the great Commands of the Goſpel concern them only as ſuch. From all which the conſequence is clear and certain, that therefore Chriſtian Unity and Love is a matter of the greateſt concernment to them.

SECT. 5.

2. THE Second Conſideration from which I propoſed to argue this great Concernment for Chriſtian Love and Unity, is their Obligation to act according to the Principles of Chriſtian Religion; which they can never do without this.

That all of us are concerned to act and behave our ſelves according to the great Preſcriptions of our Religion, I take for granted among thoſe who have any due Notions of Religion, and who underſtand any thing of the great end and purpoſes of it.

Even as neceſſary as it is to conſent to the Truth, and embrace the belief of it. And it is to no purpoſe but to enhance Mens guilt

and aggravate their Condemnation, to do the one, without a competent care in the other.

Now it is very plain, that Men can never come up in their practice to the Principles of Christian Religion, that are regardless of Love and Christian Unity, and broken into Factions, and Schisms, and unreasonable Separations from each others Communion.

And this I do not say only, because Love and Unity is it self a great and chief Instance of Christian Vertue, and no one thing is oftener recommended to Christians in the Precepts of the Gospel: But I assert it upon other reasons at present, and especially these two.

1. That Love and Charity have so great an Interest in, and Influence upon every Christian Duty, that none of them can be perform'd without it.

We can neither Worship God, nor be true to Men without Charity. Our Prayers will be rejected, if we be not in Charity with Men, and our hands are lift up in vain, if they be not without Wrath, as well as doubting. Our Blessed Lord hath told us, if we bring our Gift to the Altar, and remember that our Brother hath ought against us, we must first go and be reconciled to our Brother, and then come and offer our Gift, *Mat.* 5. 23, 24. Intimating plainly that God who hath made our forgiving our Brethren their Offences against

againſt us, the only condition upon which we can expect his forgiving ours againſt himſelf, will never accept a Service from that Man, whoſe hands are full of Blood, or his heart reeking with Envy and Malice againſt his Brother.

And I need not waſte time, to ſhew you how impoſſible it is to diſcharge that duty that we owe one to another without Love and Unity.

For this reaſon therefore is Love called by St. *Paul* the fulfilling of the Law, *Rom.* 13. 10. And therefore is the Labour and Service of a good Man called the labour of Love, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 3. and *Heb.* 6. 10. as if all a Mans duty and ſervice were the Effect and Fruit only of Love; and the truth is, in a great meaſure it is ſo.

For Love and Charity hath an Intereſt in all other Graces, and it were not very untrue to ſay, that they are but ſo many various Modifications of it. And whenever there is any duty to be performed by a good Man, there is ſome Service for his Charity, not only to engage, but to enable him to perform the ſame.

2. And Secondly, The want of Love and Unity is certainly fatal to all the purpoſes of Chriſtian Religion. And no one end of it can be anſwered without the ſame.

It is a ſure Indication of a wretched carnal Eſtate, and that Religion hath had no Effect upon ſuch a Man. The Apoſtle tells the

Corinthians plainly, that while there were jarrings and emulations among them, and but the little differences about their Miniſters, they were certainly carnal, how confident ſoever they might be of their good ſtate, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3.

It is that which naturally inclines Men to all manner of Evil. For as Love naturally prompts and inclines Men to every thing that is good; and he that wants it, wants one of the ſtrongeſt Arguments and Aſſiſtances to goodneſs: So indeed variance and hatred naturally diſpoſe Men to all manner of Evil: And as St. *James* tells us, where envying and ſtrife is, there is Confuſion, and every evil work, *Jam*: 3. 16. *i. e.* there either actually is, or when occaſion and opportunity is offered will certainly be, every thing that is evil.

And we ſee it too true every day in our own Experience, when Men divide and ſeparate each from other, they preſently begin to grow ſtrange, and envious, and open enemies. They ſeek to ſupport the credit of their own Separations, by defamations, and ſlandering others, by bitter Invectives, and unjuſt Accuſations. They are ſtudying how to leſſen and pull down each other, and whenever they get power and advantage, then to cruſh and deſtroy, and uſe all manner of violence againſt them.

So that if Men would gain the reputation of good Men, and good Chriſtians, if they would

would ſhew themſelves to be ſuch as their Religion requires them to be, they muſt be ſtrict and zealous preſervers of Love and Unity among themſelves; and it is in vain for them to pretend the one, without a due care in the other.

SECT. 6.

3. THE laſt conſideration that I have propoſed to urge Chriſtians great concernment for Love and Unity among themſelves upon, is the credit, or reproach of their Religion among others.

I need not ſtay to tell you that Chriſtians are obliged to do all they can, to adorn the Doctrine of God their Saviour; to gain all the credit and reputation to their Religion which they can. There are many expreſs Precepts that call on them to endeavour this, and the truth is, ſhould they be regardleſs in it, they were worſe in this, than the Diſciples of the rankeſt Follies, and Superſtitions in the World.

For there are no ſort of Men, but are ready to aſſert and ſtand up for their Religion, and to do any thing they can to vindicate it from reproach, and to gain reſpect and credit to it; becauſe they think it a matter of the greateſt concernment to them, and that upon which their own Credit and Wiſdom greatly

greatly depends. And ſure of all Men, Chriſtians ſhould leaſt fail of doing this, for many reaſons.

Now my Brethren there is nothing in which the Reputation and Credit of Religion is more concerned, than the ſtrict accord and unity of its Profeſſors: Nor any thing that renders it more high and venerable in the eſteem of others.

And nothing can reflect greater Ignominy and Reproach upon it, or more fatally prejudice others againſt the Belief of it, than to ſee its Profeſſors divided, and at great variance among themſelves.

Of this the Hiſtories of the Church and of Chriſtian Religion, from the beginning, through all Ages of it even to this day, do largely and fully aſſure us.

In the Apoſtolical times there was nothing that more care was taken for, than that there might be an exact Symphony, both in Faith and Affection among Chriſtians; and that for this reaſon; becauſe the Apoſtles very well ſaw, that nothing would gain more reputation to their Religion: And that nothing would more certainly expoſe it to contempt, and the ſcorn of others, than the claſhing of its Teachers in their Doctrine, or the Oppoſitions and Enmities of its Votaries.

And how truly they gheſſed in this, appears from the Practice of their Enemies in ſucceeding times; for it is certain, they ſought

for

for nothing more induſtriouſly to reproach Chriſtianity with, than differences and diviſions among thoſe that profeſſed it, and *Celſus*, that bitter Enemy of the Chriſtian Religion, that ſtrove ſo much to emprove that little difference between St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* at *Antioch*, would certainly have triumphed to ſome purpoſe indeed, could he have found out ſuch differences, as theſe latter Ages have ſeen among Chriſtians.

And it is moſt certain that nothing did more amaze and confound the great Enemies, and Perſecutors of Chriſtians in the Primitive Ages, than to ſee that exact agreement in all things of Doctrine, but eſpecially, that ſtrict and ardent Affection, that was ſo conſpicuous then among them, when it was ſaid *ad ſtuporem Gentium* (ſaith the Hiſtorian) *Behold how theſe Chriſtians love one another.*

And wiſe Men that have ſearched into the reaſons, why the Jews and many other People ſo obſtinately ſtand out againſt the embracing Chriſtian Religion, for which there are ſo many clear and convincing Arguments of Divinity and Truth to be produced, that they want nothing but common conſideration to make them Effective upon all Men.

I ſay, enquiring into the reaſons of this, they have always aſſigned this as one of the chief, namely, the ſad and lamentable Diviſions that they ſaw among Chriſtians. And the Truth is, it is not to be expected the Chriſtian

ſtian Faith ſhould make any large progreſs in the World, till they ſee the Profeſſors of it more at Unity; nor can we hope to perſuade others to believe as we do, till we are better agreed what to believe among our ſelves: And till they ſee the embracing any Form of Chriſtian Faith is not the certain way to engage them into endleſs Quarrels and Diſputes againſt others.

Then only can we hope to perſuade them to Worſhip God with us, when they ſee us agreed upon our way of Worſhipping him, and behold us with one Mouth and one conſent giving Praiſe and Honour to him.

Theſe now are the three great Conſiderations, upon which I have choſen to repreſent the great Obligation, that lyes upon all Chriſtians, to endeavour after Love and Unity among themſelves. They are all proper and ſeaſonable at any time.

SECT. 7.

2. BUT it is moſt certain, they are extreamly ſo at this time. There will never be any time when this Diſcourſe will not be needful; but if ever there were any more than other, in which it was needful for the Guides of Souls to be Zealous, to cry aloud, and with all paſſion and earneſtneſs to interpoſe in this matter, now is the time.

For

For let us I beſeech you, but recollect the forenamed Argument, and ſee if our preſent ſad experiences do not atteſt the actual truth of them.

1. Let us but conſider and ſee to what our Factions and Separations have brought this poor Church, that was once like a City at Unity in it ſelf, and when it was ſo, was terrible as an Army with Banners, and eaſily put to flight all the Armies of the Aliens.

Alas, how is ſhe now deſolate and forſaken! Her hedges broken down, the wild Boar let in, who is buſie to root up her Vines, and the ſubtil Foxes at great liberty to ſteal away her Grapes: Some buſie to tear up her very Foundations, and others to poyſon her Sons with Errour, over-run her with Faction and Schiſm, and make her once again a *Babel* of Diſorder and Confuſion.

There is little more than the Face only of a Church now left among us; and yet that Face too is defiled with many ſpots and blemiſhes. Our Governours are deſpiſed, and our Fathers have loſt their Authority over us.

That Diſcipline which of old was ſo revered, is now ſlighted and contemned, and thoſe Cenſures, which were dreaded as the very anticipations of Hell, are now derided, or gloried in; and ſome Men are ſo far from counting themſelves given up to Satan by them, that they glory in them, as the more ſure Conſignation of them to God.

Nay,

Nay, ſo wildly have ſome Men proceeded here, that Faction is counted a Mark of Saint-ſhip, and to be caſt out of the Church, is to be inrolled preſently in the Dypticks of the Godly.

Heretofore (to uſe the Pſalmiſts words) a Man was famous as he had lifted up Axes upon the thick Trees, and been any way ſerviceable to the honour and welfare of the Church; but now Men break down the carved work thereof with Axes and Hammers, and think it an acceptable and holy Zeal to lay it in the duſt.

Lord how long ſhall the Adverſary do thee this diſhonour? And how long ſhall the fooliſh Man blaſpheme thus thy Name, and own Inſtitution? Ariſe, O God, and maintain thine own cauſe, reſtrain this fury of wild Men, and teach them at laſt to conſider what they are doing, and what their mad Schiſms and Factions muſt needs iſſue in: How they will defeat their own purpoſes, and utterly pull down and finally deſtroy that Church, which they are pretending ſo earneſtly to repair and amend.

2. And we cannot but ſadly obſerve in the ſecond place, that our differences have been as fatal to our holy Religion in general, as to our Church in particular.

Alas, what is there remaining of it now among us, more than the meer Skeleton, and ſhadow of it? We have Forms and Shews and appear-

appearances enough; but O God! Where is the power of Godlineſs to be found?

Our Conteſts about Religion have razed out of our Minds the Notions of it, and we have diſputed ſo long, that we have now forgotten what that is, we have been conteſting about.

That time and ſpace which ſhould have been ſpent in Juſtice and Mercy to Men, and walking humbly with our God, hath been ſpent in wrangling and oppoſing the one, and exalting our ſelves againſt the Conſtitutions of the other. That Induſtry and Learning, thoſe parts and abilities that ſhould have been employed in true Subſtantial practical goodneſs, have been waſted in idle and unprofitable ſtudies how to make good a Notion, and to defend our own ſilly Opinions: And that Zeal, which ſhould have been exerciſed in doing good, and diſcouraging Vice, and all manner of Profaneneſs, hath vented it ſelf againſt all that have oppoſed our own party, and expired at laſt in uſeleſs and impertinent Conteſts.

Our great Pretences for Purity and Reformation and the power of Godlineſs, have introduced all manner of Profaneneſs, and our Conteſts given that advantage to Atheiſm, and Irreligion, that perhaps ſome Ages will not be able to regain from them.

And finally, inſtead of Peace and Charity, Juſtice and Honeſty, Meekneſs and Humility, and

and a Kindneſs to all Men, which are the Life and only true Badges of a Chriſtian, we have introduced by our Separations and Diviſions, Envyings and bitter Railings, Strife and Confuſion, and indeed every thing that deſerves to be called Evil.

3. And what a diſrepute and ſhame, what a diſgrace and odium it hath expoſed our Religion unto, in the ſight of all that have ſtood ſpectators of our Unchriſtian Heats and Factions, we cannot but with a great deal of Grief confeſs.

How do the Nations ſhake their Heads at at us? And what a Hiſſing and a By-word are we grown to them? What a Scandal have we brought upon the Reformation? And how have we prejudiced Men againſt any reſpect to it? We have expoſed our Religion to contempt and ſcorn, and they but laugh at us, when we would propagate the belief of it. All our Learning and Parts cannot do ſo much to defend our Religion, as our differences and diviſions do to reproach it. God Almighty make us once wiſe, and to conſider how heavy the guilt and condemnation of thoſe will be, that give offence, and cauſe the Enemies of God to blaſpheme.

4. I add only one Conſideration more, how hereby we gratifie the malice and give Effect to the deſigns of thoſe very Enemies againſt us, whom we are pretending by all

theſe

theſe things to be oppoſing and ſecuring our ſelves againſt.

O! what ſport and paſtime muſt this needs be to them, to hear us cry out ſo loud againſt Popery, and yet to ſee us do the work of it more effectually, than ever they were able to do; and to effect that deſtruction which all their endeavours and aſſaults eſſayed in vain.

Sure this is a bleeding and moſt affecting conſideration, that we ſhould become ſuch tools to our Enemies, and betray our ſelves moſt certainly into their hands, by that very method that we thought to ſave our ſelves from them.

If therefore there be any Conſolations in Chriſt, if any Bowels of Mercies to our Church, to our Religion or to our own either honour or ſafety, let us once at laſt be convinced of the neceſſity of Chriſtian Love and Charity, and perſuaded by all poſſible means to retrieve the ſame again amongſt us.

And conſequently to have an Honour and Regard to, and to make Conſcience of that ſervice in our Religion, which will be ſo greatly influential upon this among us.

To this purpoſe I have inſiſted ſo much on this Argument, and this is the End that I have been purſuing in ſo long diſcourſing to you from this Text. I pray God Almighty grant me to ſee ſome good Effect upon it.

The Concluſion.

AND now there is nothing remaining, but a Concluſion to what hath been ſaid. Nor any buſineſs for that Concluſion, but to beg the ſerious conſideration of what hath been offered upon this Subject.

The truth is, it is a ſad reflection to conſider, that Men that profeſs a reſpect and concern for Chriſtian Religion, ſhould need to be conteſted with about the obſervation of one of the chiefeſt Services in it: But it is much worſe to conſider, that ſo many endeavours of this nature ſhould prove unſucceſsful.

And for my part, I do not well know whether to impute it to the decay of the Spirit of Chriſtianity among us, or to Mens neglect to exerciſe their own Reaſon: And therefore will charge it upon the malignant Conjunction of both.

In the Primitive times, while the true fervours of Chriſtianity warmed the hearts of Men, they flocked into this repaſt, as freely without any Courtſhip, as Doves do to their Windows, where they find both food and ſafety. And all that the good Fathers were put upon then, was only to regulate the Communions, to inſtruct Men in what manner to come, not to perſuade them to do ſo.

There were no Servants then to tell their Maſter the ſaid ſtory of Mens excuſing themſelves

ſelves from coming to this Feaſt, nor any reaſon to ſay, Lord, it is done as thou commandedſt, and yet there is room; for Men ſcorned to be detained by any little excuſes, and the Oratories needed rather to be enlarged, than complain of Emptineſs.

And that it is otherwiſe now, and all the Servants muſt be ſent upon the ſame errand of inviting Gueſts, is either becauſe Men have not ſo learned Chriſt, as thoſe good Men did, or that they have forgotten what they had learned. Either the ſame Spirit that acted the one, doth not govern the other; or its vigour is in tract of time decayed, and enfeebled. Chriſtianity (eſpecially if we meaſure it by the actions of too many) is quite another thing from what it was of old, and bears no more proportion to its Primitive ſtate, than our ſmall and dwarfiſh bodies do, to the bulky and large ſtature of thoſe that have gone before us.

Men are apt to look big, and value themſelves above their Fathers, and we have learned arts to diſparage Antiquity, and to think we are the aged with whom Wiſdom dwells; but for my part, I think the ſtreams cleareſt that are neareſt the Fountains, and I would to God we were only as our Fathers were.

And that I fancy we might be (at leaſt in this Inſtance) if we did but exerciſe our own reaſon. Our due conſidering things with

Gods grace, would ſoon reduce us to a true temper, and brings us up to Primitive Preſidents.

All the Arguments that are fit to work upon Rational Beings, do concentre here, and combine in perſuading us to this Service; and would Men but allow them a place where to fix, I am confident they would move the moſt prejudiced tempers.

Take but a ſhort review of what hath been offered in this poor diſcourſe, and be your ſelves Judges: There is a plain Inſtitution of this Service, and an expreſs Command for the Obſervation of it. The reaſons upon which it is recommended are the ſame, and will continue ſo to the end of all things, or rather improve, and grow ſtronger in every ſucceeding period.

The Apoſtles, and thoſe that beſt underſtood the purpoſe of their Lord in it, did accordingly make conſcience of it, and conſtantly practiſe it, and accordingly recommended it to the Obſervation of all Chriſtians, to Chriſts ſecond coming.

The nature of the thing it ſelf requires it, and the ends to which it is inſtituted do even inforce it.

It is a ſolemn act of Adoration and Worſhip, both to our God, and our dear Lord; it is a peculiar and affecting expreſſion of our Praiſe; for the miracles of our Redemption, and it is the moſt prevailing Argument

to

to render our Prayers, ſucceſsful. And ſince we all acknowledg that our Worſhip, our giving Thanks, our Prayers to God ought to be conſtant, let any Man tell me, why this, that is both all theſe, and ſo advantageous to the purpoſes of all, ſhould not be ſo too.

It is deſigned to the greateſt purpoſes of Religion, and our own good, is conducive to, and greatly Effective of them. It is a remembring our dear Lord's Death, with thoſe tranſports of Praiſe and Joy, that are as much our Happineſs as our Duty. It is the Rite of our confederating with our Lord, and receiving the pledges of his Love and Bleſſing. It is the means of our actual partaking the Effect of what he hath done and ſuffered for our good. It is the means of uniting us to the Bleſſed Jeſus, and incorporating us into that Body, of which himſelf is Head, and to whom the benefit of all his glorious Atchievements ſolely redounds. And it is the only probable and ſure way of cementing our Factions, compoſing our differences, and uniting us in the Bands of Love and Charity, in this unhappy day of Diviſions; in which our firm adheſion is ſo needful, yea ſo abſolutely neceſſary both to our own honour and ſafety, and the continuance and credit of that Reformed Religion, which we all ſeem ſo ſolicitous for.

Theſe are Arguments that are ſuited to our Reaſon and our Intereſt too; and if there be

Gods grace, would ſoon reduce us to a true temper, and brings us up to Primitive Preſidents.

All the Arguments that are fit to work upon Rational Beings, do concentre here, and combine in perſuading us to this Service; and would Men but allow them a place where to fix, I am confident they would move the moſt prejudiced tempers.

Take but a ſhort review of what hath been offered in this poor diſcourſe, and be your ſelves Judges: There is a plain Inſtitution of this Service, and an expreſs Command for the Obſervation of it. The reaſons upon which it is recommended are the ſame, and will continue ſo to the end of all things, or rather improve, and grow ſtronger in every ſucceeding period.

The Apoſtles, and thoſe that beſt underſtood the purpoſe of their Lord in it, did accordingly make conſcience of it, and conſtantly practiſe it, and accordingly recommended it to the Obſervation of all Chriſtians, to Chriſts ſecond coming.

The nature of the thing it ſelf requires it, and the ends to which it is inſtituted do even inforce it.

It is a ſolemn act of Adoration and Worſhip, both to our God, and our dear Lord; it is a peculiar and affecting expreſſion of our Praiſe; for the miracles of our Redemption, and it is the moſt prevailing Argument

to

to render our Prayers, ſucceſsful. And ſince we all acknowledg that our Worſhip, our giving Thanks, our Prayers to God ought to be conſtant, let any Man tell me, why this, that is both all theſe, and ſo advantageous to the purpoſes of all, ſhould not be ſo too.

It is deſigned to the greateſt purpoſes of Religion, and our own good, is conducive to, and greatly Effective of them. It is a remembring our dear Lord's Death, with thoſe tranſports of Praiſe and Joy, that are as much our Happineſs as our Duty. It is the Rite of our confederating with our Lord, and receiving the pledges of his Love and Bleſſing. It is the means of our actual partaking the Effect of what he hath done and ſuffered for our good. It is the means of uniting us to the Bleſſed Jeſus, and incorporating us into that Body, of which himſelf is Head, and to whom the benefit of all his glorious Atchievements ſolely redounds. And it is the only probable and ſure way of cementing our fractions, compoſing our differences, and uniting us in the Bands of Love and Charity, in this unhappy day of Diviſions; in which our firm adheſion is ſo needful, yea ſo abſolutely neceſſary both to our own honour and ſafety, and the continuance and credit of that Reformed Religion, which we all ſeem ſo ſolicitous for.

Theſe are Arguments that are ſuited to our Reaſon and our Intereſt too; and if there be

any Love and Reſpect to our God, to our Redeemer, to our Religion, and to the beſt Reformed Church upon Earth. Or if there be any Bowels of Compaſſions to our own Souls, and all the great Intereſts of it, they cannot fail of effect upon us.

For God's ſake therefore conſider, and ſhew your ſelves Chriſtians, yea ſhew your ſelves Men. Shew ſome reſpect to your Religion, and the Laws and Conſtitutions of it, and to him who is the great Founder thereof. Conſider what arguments, either of Reaſon or Intereſt, are proper to affect Men, and then I will begin to hope this Diſcourſe will not be in vain.

I am not thus earneſt with you all, I thank God I need not; ſome of you know what is your duty, and (I doubt not) feel the Comforts of doing it. But there are too many, to whom no addreſſes can be too earneſt in this thing, and to whom I would uſe that of St. *Paul* to his *Corinthians*, in a caſe relating to this Service; *In this I commend you not.*

But I hope that I ſhall, and beg that I may, and therefore offer theſe poor Meditations to you, by which if you, or any others after you be in any meaſure benefited. I ſhall have cauſe to rejoyce in the day of the Lord Jeſus, and you with me, and both of us, the happineſs to ſit down together at the Sup-

per

per of the Lamb (of which this is a preſent Symbol and *Paraſceve*) in which we ſhall fill our Souls with gladneſs, and riſe up to ſing eternal Hallelujahs to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt. *Amen.*

THE

BRITISH
7 AP 80
MUSEUM

THE CONTENTS.

CHAP. I.

Clearing the ſenſe of the Words, and the reaſonableneſs of the preſent Collection from them, and propoſing three Arguments for the truth of it.

CHAP. II.

The firſt Argument from what the Corinthians *then did, to which this Speech relates, and wherein that great Abuſe of theirs then conſiſted. Where ſomething of the Love-Feaſt, and the Conſequent Service is explained.*

CHAP.

The CONTENTS.

CHAP. III.

The Second Argument urged and driven to its full force by four Propoſitions. The firſt Propoſition explained. And this Service ſhewed to be plainly and expreſly Commanded and Inſtituted by our Saviour.

CHAP. IV.

The Second Propoſition. The nature of Temporary Inſtitutions conſidered; how to judge when any Inſtitution is ſo: And the Sacrament ſhewed not to be any ſuch.

CHAP. V.

The Third and Fourth Propoſitions. Wherein is ſhewed that this Service is no more limited to any Particular Time then any other Service in Chriſtianity, and that it was accordingly underſtood

derſtood and practiſed by the Apoſtles and Primitive Chriſtians, as a ſtanding part of their Publick Service and Worſhip.

CHAP. VI.

The third head of Arguments propounded; wherein the Nature of this Service is ſhewed; and it is conſidered as an Act of Worſhip to God; in what reſpects it is ſo, and the Argument improved from that Conſideration.

CHAP. VII.

This Service is conſidered as a Solemn Act of Adoration, and Worſhip of Chriſt. In what reſpects it is ſo, and the Argument improved from each of them.

CHAP.

The CONTENTS.

CHAP. VIII.

The Second Part of this Third Argument; where the ends of this Service are conſidered; Five of theſe propoſed to be inſiſted on. The Firſt this in the Text; to what end this remembring Chriſts Death is Inſtituted; and what an Argument each of theſe ends affords to the preſent purpoſe.

CHAP. IX.

A Second end of this Service inſiſted on, Wherein the Ancient Eaſtern *way of ſtriking Covenants is a little explained. The ſame ſhewed to be accommodated by our Saviour, to his purpoſe in the Sacrament; and the Argument improved from this alſo.*

CHAP.

The CONTENTS.

CHAP. X.

Divided into four Sections. In the First the third end of this Service is mentioned and explained, and the Truth of it confirmed by ſome peculiar and concerning conſiderations. In the Second another Argument from Analogy is conſidered, and ſome places of Scripture produced. In the Third that place of St. John, *Chap. 6. Ver. 53. is vindicated from an Objection againſt the ſenſe of it. In the Fourth the Argument from this conſideration is largely Improved.*

CHAP. XI.

Divided into five Sections. The fourth end of this Service is mentioned, and ſhewed wherein our Union to Chriſt conſiſteth. In the Second it is ſhewed how the Holy Sacrament is effective of this Union In the Third the Argument is improved from the Firſt thing in which this Union

con-

conſiſteth, in which the neceſſity of Church-Communion, and the danger of Schiſm is a little largely conſidered. In the Fourth the Argument is improved from the ſecond Inſtance in which this Union conſiſts, viz. *an intimate Love between Chriſt and Good Men, and how much it concerns Men to keep up a ſtrong ſenſe of it. In the Fifth the Argument is improved from the Third thing in which this Union conſiſteth: Being acted by the Divine Spirit: How much it concerns us to ſecure this, and what the Bleſſings and advantages of it are.*

CHAP. XII.

Divided into ſeven Sections. In the Firſt the laſt End of this Service is propoſed, viz. *the cloſe Union of Chriſtians one to another. In the Second, How this Service is Effective of it. In the Third the Argument is improved by ſhewing the grand concernment of this to all Chriſtians, by Scripture. In the Fourth ſome further con-*

conſiderations to ſhew the great Importance of this. And the firſt of theſe inſiſted on, viz. *the conſideration of them as a Church. In the Fifth the ſecond conſideration propoſed, their Obligation to act according to the Principles of Chriſtian Religion. In the Sixth the third and laſt conſideration for the concernment of Chriſtian Love and Charity propoſed,* viz. *the Credit or Reproach of Chriſtian Religion among others. In the Seventh theſe three Reaſons are conſidered again with a particular reſpect to us, and our Circumſtances at this day. The Concluſion, Recapitulating the whole diſcourſe, and preſſing the ſerious complyance with the purpoſe of it.*

FINIS.

Piety the beſt Rule of Orthodoxy, &c. by the ſame Author. 8vo.